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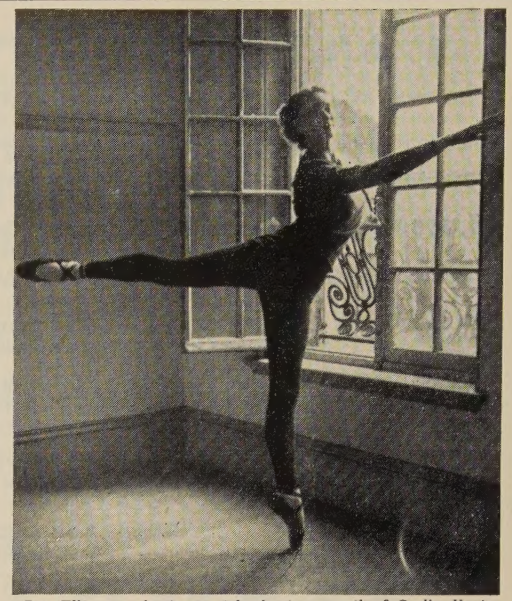

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Personality of the month

Photo: Houston Rogers

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA

Reason : For giving the best first performance in a great classic to be seen for years.

WHEN Princess Aurora Beriosova received the roses from her four princely suitors in the first act of *Sleeping Beauty,* instead of throwing them at her mother, as is the usual custom, she went over and presented them with the utmost grace. A small point, perhaps, but one which gave lie to her whole performance for the first time in this formidable and unnerving role. She really was a princess who could not make an ungracious gesture. From the moment she was first seen, running excitedly to her sixteenth birthday party until her ultimate union with her Prince, a hundred years later, Beriosova took to the Aurora role as if she had been born to it.

There is no entrance more alarming to the ballerina than the first act entrance leading immediately into the Rose *adagio,* yet she never seemed to falter. She seemed radiant and pleased to see her suitors; Her *équilibre* was good and she managed to get her arms up beautifully *en couronne* between shaking hands with each of them. Her variation was perfectly burnished and danced with a complete understanding of what it was about. Her scene with the spindle and the beginning of her big sleep was as moving as the first act of *Giselle.*

Her vision was grave and with the moonlit quality that one always assumes that visions should have. Seldom have I seen an Aurora manage the alternation between being beguiling and elusive so well. There really seemed a reason for the Prince to chase this vision between the ever-changing pattern of fairies. Anybody would want to continue the search, even if it were only in that rickety Covent Garden boat, to meet her in flesh and blood.

The first two acts were so faultless that it would have been almost unnatural for the last to be equally so. Her grand *pas de deux* was a little uncertain and one of the " fish dives " was not as good as it should have been. But these were but small things that can be easily rectified and did nothing to detract from a performance that can be called " great " in the true sense of the word; it might even be called historic.

July 1954 Vol. 5 No. 7

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assistant Editor: CLIVE BARNES
WORLD'S LARGEST NET SALE IN THE FIELD

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A garden is a lovesome thing—so what!

IT was nice of you to want to see our little garden in July but what a pity you could not have seen it last year, or the year before or the year before that! Then it was a riot of bloom but this year, alas, there is nothing—well not quite nothing, because the Festivalaria seems to be flourishing on the south bank of our humble stream. Yes, it does seem to be a hardy bi-annual doesn't it and *so* popular.

What is that you say? Oh, that huge clump which takes up so much space. It does tend to swamp the others out, doesn't it? But you must know what Wellsiena looks like because it's one of the oldest things we have. Yes, it was here when we came, but since then the newer variety—Wellsiena Roseburiana—has started to make itself felt. What a sturdy flower! A pity it isn't out just now. Then, of course, the Rambertensis is older still and such a good everlasting—however bad the year it always brightens up this corner of the garden.

No, dear, just overlook those bare patches, pretend you never saw them. What were they? Well, we had a big bush of Internationali and it was doing so well, but the gardener forgot to water it and—it just died. We feel rather ashamed of ourselves. Then we had a bed of Metropolitana which showed great promise, but we forgot to cover it up before the frost. Then our Walter Gorei and our Comiquensis never quite got going; they showed such pretty buds, but they never seemed to blossom. We have tried all kinds of other little things, but somehow they never do quite as well as the nurseryman tells us they will. Perhaps our soil is not right for them.

I don't like to admit this, dear, but I have just a tiny confession to make. You see we really are such amateur gardeners still. No, we are really, and it's no use your protesting. I know we like to let our neighbours think that we have been at the game for ages and ages. Yes, we manage to put on a show, but underneath it all we are still amateurs and I am afraid we need more experience. Yes, I know the Wellsienas run riot and you cannot really go wrong with Festivalaria, but it is nothing to do with us, they just flourish on their own. I am afraid we just don't know how to tender the more fragile young plants. That's something we have to learn.

Oh! what have you stepped on? It doesn't matter about that, it was only one of those new plants we just put in; probably would never have amounted to anything anyway. Please don't give it another thought. But it *was* nice of you to come and if only you could have seen it all five years ago. . . .

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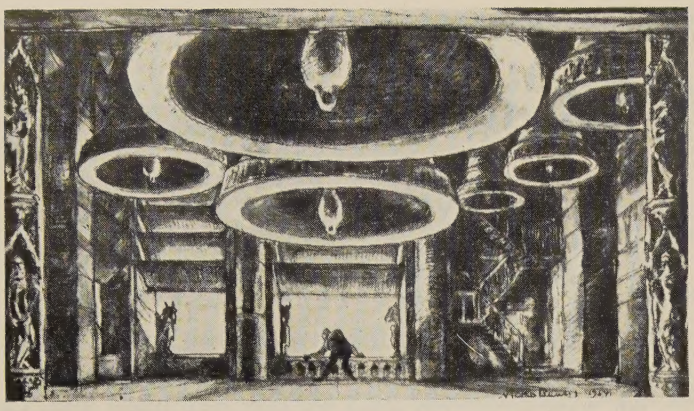
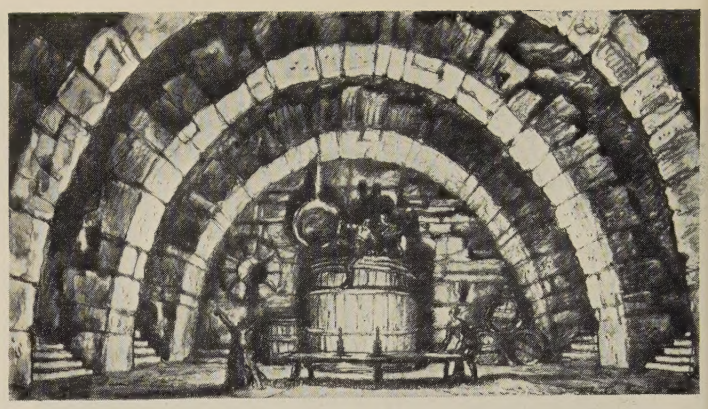


Designs by Nicola Benois for Nicholas Beriosoff's production of La Esmeralda *for Festival Ballet. The Bell Tower of Notre-Dame, the opening scene.*



Where the Catacombs meet. The scenes, for this production, are based on the Russian version and vary slightly from the original Perrot ballet first given at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1844.

Photos: Klemantaski

La Esmeralda

July 15 will see Nicholas Beriosoff's new production of *La Esmeralda* for Festival Ballet. Here is a description of the first production, which took place at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, 110 years ago.

by IVOR GUEST

OF all Perrot's grand ballets—with the exception of *Giselle*, of which he was but part author—*La Esmeralda* alone has survived, having outlived *Alma* and *Ondine* despite the prophecy that *The Times* made at the time of its creation in 1844, that it would not become so popular as either of these two earlier works, though dramatically superior to both.

Just as the choreographers of *Giselle* had worked to a scenario founded on a fancy of the great Romantic poet, Théophile Gautier, so, in *La Esmeralda*, Perrot derived his inspiration from another, and greater, giant of Romantic literature, Victor Hugo. Hugo's novel, *Notre Dame de Paris*, had appeared in 1831.

The germ of Perrot's masterpiece originated in the brain of Benjamin Lumley. When the subject was first suggested to him, Perrot rejected it as impracticable, but eventually Lumley was able to convert him to his own way of thinking, and, while the ballet-master was working out the scenario, would often sit up with him well into the early hours of morning assisting and encouraging him in his task.

To compose the score Cesare Pugni, then a comparatively unknown musician, was brought over from Paris, and worked in close collaboration with Perrot.

Change of ballerinas

Early in the summer of 1843, Perrot had made sufficient progress to enable him to select a ballerina to play the part of Esmeralda. His choice fell on the tall, raven-haired Adèle Dumilâtre, whom he introduced to London at the opening of that season in March. But in the course of their *grand pas de deux* in the divertissement, *L'Aurore*, he twisted his foot, and this painful accident confined him to his room for some weeks. When he was well enough to resume his duties, Cerrito had arrived, for whom a new ballet had to be staged. *La Esmeralda* was perforce put aside, but only to be taken up again at the earliest opportunity. The following season, 1844, Lumley succeeded in engaging Carlotta Grisi, and it was with her that Perrot resumed rehearsals at Her Majesty's towards the end of February.

Preparations went ahead smoothly, and all was ready by the opening night of the season on 9th March. The success of *La Esmeralda* was complete.

The plot had been modified to suit the requirements of early Victorian taste. The only serious liberty that Perrot took with Hugo's characters was to transform Phœbus from a handsome but licentious Lothario, callously counting Esmeralda as one of his conquests, into a hero of the conventional type, whose intervention finally saves her from the scaffold.

Claude Frollo, the archdeacon, whose unhallowed passion for the gypsy girl turns into a sadistic hatred, and, in the novel, brings about her death, necessarily played a somewhat lesser part in the ballet, although his character was not fundamentally altered. Considerable simplification was also necessary to reduce the plot of the novel to the required proportions of a five-scene ballet; the secret of Esmeralda's birth was discarded, as also was the torture scene at her trial, her rescue by Quasimodo and her sojourn in the sanctuary of the cathedral, the storming of Notre Dame by the truands and Quasimodo's desperate defence, and the awful fate of Claude Frollo, who, in the novel, is pushed by the hunchback from the roof of the cathedral while Esmeralda's body still swings from the gibbet.

For the macabre final pages of the novel, a happy ending was substituted " without the slightest loss of interest." " A perfect model of ballet building," *The Times* described it. " Never did we see those parts of a long story that might be dramatically effective selected and arranged with such skill as in this new ballet."

Parisian background

The action of the ballet was set in Paris towards the end of the fifteenth century. After the overture, the curtain rose to reveal the Cour des Miracles, the haunt of beggars, thieves and gypsies. It is sunset and the stage is thronged with a crowd of vagabonds, known as the truands, gaming, drinking, and fighting. In their midst is Clopin, their acknowledged king. Suddenly Pierre Gringoire, a struggling poet, appears, pursued by a body of thieves. He throws himself at Clopin's feet, imploring his protection. But his only possession is a volume of poems, and Clopin, in his indignation and disappointment at the victim's poverty, orders Gringoire to be hanged. Crazed with fear, Gringoire seeks to take advantage of the beggars' law, by which he will be spared if he can find a woman to marry him. But no one will accept him. At that moment, followed by her pet goat, Esmeralda, " the loveliest of vagrants," approaches, dancing gaily and heedlessly, " her head tossing from side to side." At once she realises Gringoire's plight, and touched with compassion, she consents to marry him. Their marriage is celebrated by the breaking of a pitcher, and the crowd give themselves up to dancing.

After a *Valse de vieux Paris*, danced by the *coryphées*, came the famous *Truandaise*, a *pas de deux* by Carlotta Grisi and Perrot, " delicately-imagined, novel, and eccentric," expressive of Esmeralda's pity for Gringoire and at the same time her amusement at his plight. It was " a compound of good humour and a mild sort of malice." Carlotta circled the stage with wonderful rapidity and lightness, tempting her partner to follow her, " now dipping towards him, now avoiding him, now peeping at him archly under her arm, always within two paces of him, and yet eluding his touch until he becomes almost tipsy with delight."

When it was over, the whole *corps de ballet* surged into movement in a *bacchanale*. Their evolutions were " new and striking," wrote the *Morning Herald*, giving a rare indication of the choreographic pattern of such a scene. " Some crosses are formed by them, which are bisected by moving lines at right angles very ingeniously; the effect of which, when seen from above, is excellent."

Suddenly the mood of the music changes and a plaintive note is struck. The curfew sounds and the crowd disperses. Esmeralda leaves, but not before noticing the sinister glance of the priest Claude Frollo (Gosselin). When she is gone, Frollo seeks the aid of Clopin in his desire to possess her. For a bribe Clopin reveals that she will shortly recross the square, and Frollo and Quasimodo (Coulon), the hunchbacked bellringer of Notre Dame, lie in wait for her. They seize her, but are disturbed by the approach of the patrol. Frollo makes his escape, but the hunchback is arrested.

Struck by the girl's beauty, the captain of the patrol, Phœbus (Saint-Léon), questions her and learns that she is an orphan and alone in the world. She plays with the end of his scarf, which he gives to her. Then she intercedes for Quasimodo, and Phœbus orders him to be released. At his demand for a kiss in exchange for the scarf, she recoils and asks him to take back the scarf.

When he refuses, she slips from his grasp and disappears into the darkness.

The second scene, set in Esmeralda's humble lodging, opened with a *pas scénique, La Nuit des noces*. Gringoire enters to find Esmeralda gazing sadly and lovingly at the scarf and at the word "Phœbus," which she has formed with ivory letters on the floor. He places his arm round her waist, but she frees herself and draws a dagger from her belt. Pity alone induced her to marry him, she tells him, and she shows him into an adjoining room. Her solitude is soon interrupted by the appearance of Frollo and Quasimodo. Frollo declares his passion and, meeting with a refusal, tries to violate her, but Esmeralda succeeds in making her escape through a secret door.

Watteau inspiration

The scene changed to the garden of a mansion: "an exquisite Watteau picture on a large scale." Festoons of flowers hang from the trees, and the green foliage glows with the light from innumerable lamps.

Celebrations are about to begin for the marriage of Phœbus and his highborn *fiancée*, Fleur-de-lys de Gondelaurier. The girl observes that her bethrothed is pensive and distant, and that he is no longer wearing the scarf she had given him. Soon the guests arrive, the women all dressed in silver-embroidered white satin, and the dancing begins. A *pas des fleurs* introduced, as a dancer, Adelaide Frassi, who was playing the part of Fleur-de-lys. Then followed a *pas de trois* by Saint-Léon, Adeline Plunkett and Elisa Scheffer; it was in this dance that Saint-Léon, who possessed a phenomenal elevation, executed what the *Morning Post* described as "an extraordinary saltatory artifice," leaping into the air like the flying Mercury in the well-known painting by Pietro da Cortona.

Meanwhile Esmeralda has been invited to dance at the festivities, and she has arrived in the company of Gringoire. Phœbus asks if he may dance with her, and Fleur-de-lys becomes apprehensive at the sight of her betrothed so absorbed by the fascinating gypsy. When the dance is over, she chides him gently. Esmeralda, dancing now with Gringoire, produces Phœbus's scarf to show that she still loves him. At this proof of her lover's infidelity, Fleur-de-lys reproaches him bitterly, and is borne away fainting. The guests threaten Esmeralda, who is protected by the faithful Gringoire.

A drop-cloth was then lowered, representing a cabaret by the Seine. It is night. Frollo and Quasimodo enter and hide. Soon Esmeralda appears with Phœbus, who declares his love for her. "Nothing can be more exquisitely managed than her pantomime" in this scene, wrote *The Times* of Carlotta Grisi. "The timidity with which she recoiled from him, and which gradually gave way to the overpowering effects of her love, the contest between two feelings, which gradually subsided, was most beautifully managed.

"Those who have read the novel itself and know what the scene in the cabaret is in the original, can alone appreciate the delicacy with which a situation so critical was preserved without the slightest offence, while all the emotions were retained." Esmeralda is kneeling before Phœbus, her head resting on his arm, when Frollo leaps from his hiding-place. To protect her, Phœbus draws Esmeralda into the shadows. There is a flash of steel, a groan, and the sound of a body falling. Frollo leaps through the window, while Esmeralda sinks to the floor in despair. A crowd enters, and Esmeralda, denounced as the murderess of her lover, is carried away protesting.

The stage then opened out to show the gates of the prison by the banks of the Seine, with the twin towers of Notre Dame stretching above the roofs in the distance. Esmeralda is led to the prison, followed by Gringoire, who attempts to stir up the populace in her defence. Suddenly the stage is invaded by the procession of the Fools' Pope. Quasimodo, in mock papal robes, is borne upon a chair, followed by a crowd of truands.

The tolling of a bell interrupts their revelry, and Esmeralda emerges from the prison on her way to the scaffold. She lingers to bid a last goodbye to Gringoire. Frollo then steps forward. He can still save her, he says, if she will only yield to him. Scornfully she refuses. At this moment there is a stir in the crowd and Phœbus pushes his way to the front. His wound was only superficial, and he denounces Frollo as his assailant. Maddened with fury, Frollo tears himself free from the guards who hold him, and rushes, dagger in hand, at Esmeralda. Quasimodo snatches the weapon from his grasp and plunges it into the villain's heart.

Grisi and Elssler

Carlotta Grisi's portrayal of Esmeralda was so perfect an impersonation of Hugo's heroine that one critic declared that it could only be the result of a diligent study of the novel. The emphasis lay not so much on the tragic implications of the character, as on its softer qualities, on Esmeralda's tenderness and her devotion to Phœbus, her "merriment, sprightliness, love and benevolence." In the dances, her style was such as almost to defy description. One could recognise the characteristics which stamped the styles of her rivals—the innocent playfulness of Cerrito, the arch coquetry of Elssler, the quiet poetry of Taglioni—but there was a quality above all this which endeared her to the hearts of all who beheld her, as well as to most of those who danced with her.

La Esmeralda was revived in the last weeks of the season with Fanny Elssler in the title-rôle. It afforded an interesting comparison. Where Grisi's portrayal was "sensitive and affectionate, waggish and passionate, full of archness and amiability, waywardness and *espiéglerie*," Elssler's was less delicate, but more intense and more in the grand tragic manner. In an attempt to analyse the difference, *The Times* wrote that Elssler looked down upon the character and its capabilities as an artist, whilst Grisi identified herself with its joys and sorrows by a sort of unstudied sympathy.

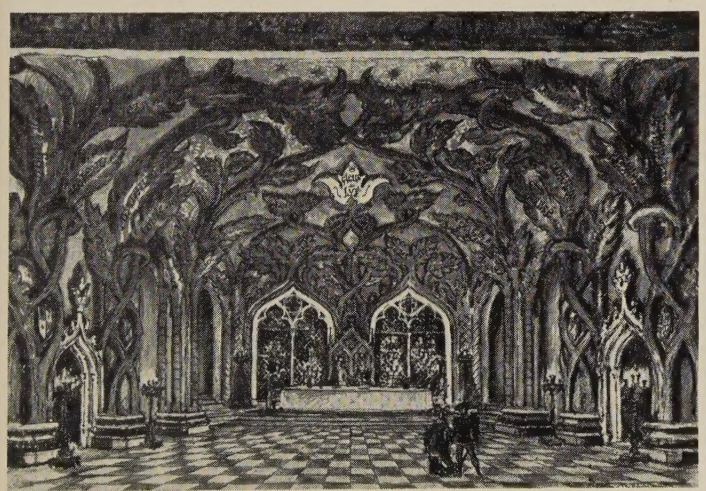
The difference in the two dancers' interpretations, however, was less marked than it had been in *Giselle*, where Elssler had seized upon the "terror" as the dominant element, and Grisi on the "pathos." Elssler's Esmeralda was a studied portrayal, coming from the intellect; Carlotta's "far more native and unsophisticated."

With Elssler, therefore, it was the dramatic moments in the ballets which stood out in greatest relief.

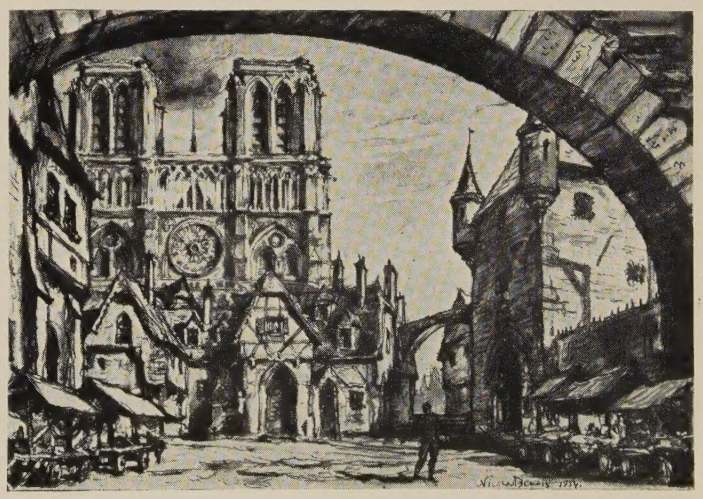
The achievements of Carlotta Grisi and Fanny Elssler did not, however, detract from the credit given to Perrot as choreographer, who in no other work demonstrated more effectively the underlying truth of the precepts of Noverre, which he studied so carefully.

The audience's interest was not allowed to flag: the ballet was played through without any long intervals. Great care had been given to each one of the characters, who carried on the drama by means of gestures much more natural than were ordinarily seen.

The above extracts are reproduced by courtesy of Phœnix House Ltd. and form part of the chapter on the ballet, *La Esmeralda*, **from Ivor Guest's new book,** *The Romantic Ballet in London*. **This will be published by Phœnix House Ltd. in the third week of September, price 25/-.**



Two more designs by Nicola Benois. The Ballroom which replaces the original scene in the garden of a mansion.



The final scene—La Place de Notre-Dame.
Photos: Klemantaski

The season that wasn't

IF you believe that at a time when we may be at war with Germany you should not listen to Wagner, read Goëthe or look at a Dürer; or that if we are not fighting side-by-side with Japan you should not appreciate a Noh or Kabuki drama or contemplate a Hokusai. Or that because we may not hold the same political views as Russia we should not listen to Tchaikovsky or watch the great classics of Russian ballet. If you sincerely believe this, then you were obviously pleased that Galina Ulanova and a company of most eminent Soviet dancers had to postpone their season at the Paris Opéra at the very last moment.

That art is above all political creeds and beliefs is perhaps an old-fashioned theory, but one to which many of us subscribe; in fact, many of us are prepared to fight for it as long as we still have breath in our bodies.

It is now old news that France and Russia agreed on an exchange —the Comédie-Francaise should appear in Moscow and a company of Russian dancers, headed by the great Ulanova, should appear at the Paris Opéra. The French company went to Moscow, appeared there with enormous success, and were generally fêted. The Russian company arrived in Paris, rehearsed and were seen about the place. Many people came from all parts of the globe to see them and tickets reached fantastic sums in the Black Market. The programmes were arranged so that each should contain a whole act from a ballet, not well known outside Russia, to be followed by a great number of dances from better-known works. Everything was ready, some people were even dressed for the performance—then came the fall of Dien Bien Phu in French Indo-China.

That the national theatres should be closed for a day to mark this obviously tragic national disaster, was perfectly right and understandable. That the season should be cancelled altogether was a disaster of another kind that has had, and will continue to have, repercussions far beyond the field of battle.

We were told that had the Russians appeared there might have been riots. The one answer to that is that if our Queen had paid any heed to the same sort of threats on her great Commonwealth tour, she would probably have never left home. The fact is that had any disturbance been caused during the performance, the Russians would have had a following that would have so out-weighed the rest that order could have been quickly restored. Unpleasant it might have been, but I am certain that good manners and an understanding of the benefits to be gained by the occasion would have prevailed. We have not surely sunk so far into barbarism, or have we?

English impresario Peter Daubeny sprang into the breach and offered the Soviet dancers the Stoll Theatre for three weeks. Everyone in England wanted to see them and the obstacles were removed to make the way clear for the season. But Moscow, no doubt fed up to the teeth with the Western democracies, recalled the company and they flew away from Paris to dance in East Berlin. Where, we gather, they got very irritated by the interminable rhythmic clapping of factory delegations to try and make them give repeated encores. Later the company will probably go and dance in Cairo.

Thus ends one of the sorriest incidents in recent ballet history. We can only hope that amends can soon be made by some Russo-British exchange, because such exchanges, as we have said before, can do more than anything to create understanding between the peoples of this earth.

Peter Williams

Puppy bites dog

CLIVE BARNES on the present attitude towards criticism and the newspapers' attitude to ballet critics.

ALL critics are fundamentally unimportant little creatures, and no sane man would claim for them an important place on the plains of Parnassus. However in a modest way they fulfil a useful function.

With enthusiasm and knowledge they act as the self-appointed guardians of public taste. They bring to art a standard of values derived from their instinct, environment and intellect, and use that standard to assess the creations of the artists around them.

By their assessments, and the explanations for those assessments, they are able to exert some influence on the public and, very occasionally, even on the artists themselves.

They are advocates for what they believe to be most valuable in art. Never right and never wrong, they argue a purely subjective viewpoint in an attempt to make friends and influence people.

Consider a court of law. The barristers argue, presumably according to the dictates of their consciences, the judge, drawing from his fund of legal experience, sums up but the jury has the final word.

In the arts the critics take the place of the barristers and judge. Their personal opinions are eventually subservant to those of the jury which they serve. They are specialists seeking to propound justice; the non-specialist jury (i.e. the public) listens to their views and comes to a decision with the aid of its own common-sense. An admirable system.

It is apparent that the critic, if his function resembles in any way that of a lawyer's, must be a man of some learning and sensibility. His is a craft the details of which will not be learnt in a day. We would think little enough of the counsel who opened his brief with the remark that he had never before seen a Law Court, even less if finding himself in such a predicament he maintained a discreet silence about his ignorance.

Most of the arts have critics worthy of the responsibility entrusted to them. Specialists in their own field, but possessing a wide general knowledge of many, they are well-equipped to give an intelligent and thought-provoking appraisal of any work that comes within their ken.

But is this general level of competence attained by most of our ballet critics? Obviously the most important channel of ballet criticism (inasmuch as it is the one reaching the largest public) is that existing in the columns of the daily and Sunday press. Yet it is a lamentable, indeed, a shameful fact, that not one of the daily papers and only two of the Sunday papers (*The Sunday Times* and *The Observer*—and all honour to them for it) employ a specialist ballet critic.

The other newspapers utilise a variety of persons, frequently the music critic. Occasionally this latter practice works moderately well when the music critic happens to be knowledgeable and sympathetic towards ballet, but more often it results in guarded reviews of little use and interest to either the intelligent ballet-goer or the ballet artist.

In fact, let us face it, the average newspaper review appearing today in the exalted British Press is invariably non-committal, not infrequently inaccurate and comparatively rarely corresponds with the impressions of the trained and experienced ballet observers. On the whole it varies between balletomane gush, social chit-chat and monosyllabic reportage.

No one wishes to imply that ballet is an esoteric ritual that can only be appreciated by a handful of chosen initiates. Such a view is unmitigated nonsense. But obviously before a man purports to give his opinions on ballet in print (particularly in the extremely public print of a daily newspaper) it is surely essential for him to have more experience and knowledge than the majority of the people (that admittedly small handful of readers interested in ballet reviews) for whom he is writing.

Perhaps the newspapers in question (and many are in question) feel reluctant to employ a specialist to deal with a subject that has comparatively little general appeal when considered with, say, football or knitting. If this be so, although it is hardly in accordance with the highest canons of journalism, times are hard and one can always have a decent respect for honest poverty. An extra mouth on the bread-line could be an embarrassment. But in these circumstances would they not do better to ignore ballet altogether than to subject it to the cut-price verdicts of bored and, probably, unwilling journalists.

Ballet is the one art-form in which this country can hold its head as high as any other. Yet the standard of ballet criticism as it appears in our newspapers is surely among the lowest in the world. How odd! One could almost write to *The Times* about it.

BALLET IN RUSSIA

AT the invitation of the Soviet Ministry of Culture, Evan Senior, the editor of our companion magazine, MUSIC AND MUSICIANS, has gone to Russia to study at first hand musical life in Russia today. He has seen the Russian ballet in Moscow and will report exclusively in DANCE AND DANCERS his impressions of the dancers and their performances.

His first article, *Is This The Second Ulanova*? will appear in our August number. He will also compare the version of *Swan Lake* he saw in Prague on his way to Russia with the Moscow production.

Evan Senior's reports on music in Russia will appear exclusively in MUSIC AND MUSICIANS and an article on the Moscow Children's Theatre will appear exclusively in PLAYS AND PLAYERS, our companion theatre magazine.

All these magazines will be in great demand—please give your newsagent a firm order for regular delivery to make sure of your copy or send us a postal subscription. Single copies are 1s. 8d. (post free) from our offices.

Soviet dancers at the Paris Opéra

Galina Ulanova rehearsing on the stage of the Paris Opéra with Kondratoff.

Raissa Strouchkova rehearsing in the famous Foyer de la Danse at the Opéra.

Photographed by Lido

Dancers arriving for the reception given for them at the Opéra. L. to R.: Raissa Strouchkova, Galina Ulanova, Youry Ydanoff and Nina Anissimova.

At the reception. Michel Renault, principal male dancer at the Opéra, is seen drinking a toast to Georgi Farmaniantz (centre). Mlle. Grimoin is seen on the left.

Jack Cole *Photo: Marcus Blechman*

Jack Cole speaks—

— on the difficulties and complications of choreographing for the films to which he has made so distinguished a contribution.

by ARTHUR TODD

FROM the time of the earliest "flickers" of four decades ago down to today's super-musicals, dance has played an increasingly important role in films. In retrospect, all of this has been a completely logical development because motion pictures are, primarily, movement. Of necessity, therefore, films actually require the heightened use of movement and dance to give them animation.

Very often Hollywood, at least, has distorted dance: treating it trivially or mishandled it entirely. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that films have brought dance to audiences numbered in the hundreds of millions around the world, and some of these films can be noteworthy because with dance, they speak a universal language that knows no barriers.

Today, though Hollywood generally does not yet equal the dance taste or integration of the Broadway musical form, promising things have been happening and more will if the film capital of America ever awakens to the full potentialities of dance and its use in films.

Jack Cole, who has spent the better part of the past fourteen years in Hollywood, has consistently pioneered in raising the craft and technique of film choreography. As a youngster, Jack Cole studied and danced in the Denishawn Company, also worked with the Humphrey-Weidman group before going on to win his initial fame as a dancer in New York night clubs and Broadway musicals.

Next came a series of Broadway musicals that were made chiefly notable for Cole's choreography. As a result, Hollywood beckoned in 1940 and, since then, there has been a series of notable dance films that bore the Cole imprint: *Kismet* with Marlene Dietrich; Rita Hayworth's *Gilda, Down to Earth* and *Tonight and Every Night*; Danny Kaye's *On The Riviera*, among a score of others that were choreographed for Columbia, Metro - Goldwyn - Mayer and Twentieth Century-Fox. In between these screen commitments have been such major Broadway musicals as *Magdalena* and the current *Kismet*.

A damped explosion

IN an interview granted exclusively for DANCE AND DANCERS, Jack Cole spoke at length on the problems that face a cinema choreographer.

"I have very definite, determined and hopeful views on dancing and choreography for the screen," claims Mr. Cole, "but, for the moment, I think we must all be patient. When I first came to California and the movies, I was exploding with enthusiasm—I saw no reason why dancing and musical numbers need be so pedestrian and unimaginative, so pretentious and dull, so enormous and so hilariously stupid. After a little experience, I was astounded that they came off as well as they did."

"As long as we must deal with the backstage or entertainment story," he continues, "just so long will the dance production remain at its present level. Ten times out of ten the central role in a musical number must be performed by a performer who can only be classified as a talented amateur. The architecture of the entire number must be designed with these limitations in mind. The miracles that sometimes happen are truly miracles and could only happen in the movies. The list of unsung heroes that sweat, strain and curse to bring forth this mediocrity is long—set designer, costume, designer, musical arranger, camera man and dance director."

Fantasy and realism

Comparing the approach to different mediums, Cole states, "The great difference at present between theatre and screen is one of fantasy and realism. When the curtain goes up in the theatre, the audience is actually agreeing and participating in the art of make-believe. On the screen, documentary realism takes over and we believe that what we see is really there. This point of view is not implicit but has become accepted. Therefore, people on the screen only dance if (1) their job in life is that of an entertainer in a theatre, night-club, etc.; (2) someone dreams, thereby excusing our flight from reality; (3) the character happens to be Fred Astaire or Gene Kelly, in which case the audience has conditioned itself and the author need make no explanation for the movement fantasy that may ensue.

"Dance in the theatre must be unified and sustained—not so on the screen. What would

Harriet Ann Gray in Columbia's film, Down to Earth.

Ann Miller and Jack Cole in Columbia's Eadie Was a Lady

Janet Collins (centre) in Columbia's Thrill of Brazil. *Yet another picture which was distinguished by Jack Cole choreography.*

be disaster in New York can be mildly successful in California. The camera offers enormous latitude to the choreographer if he learns its powers, its whims and its evils. Like all mechanical devices, if exploited for its own sake it becomes tasteless and violently intrudes itself on an imaginative performance. For the choreographer it has the exalted power to force the audience to have his point of view at all times and points of viewing completely impossible in the theatre. By the same token, the difficulty of obtaining presence on the screen is enormous.

"Movement always appears to be under glass, the strange paradox of seeming not real in a medium that is real above all else. In colour the difficulty is doubled because it is hard to get a sharp edge around rapid and brilliant movement. The camera obliterates all stress and strain and all kinetic drama is lost. Dynamics are lost and movement outline in space is emphasised. It has the power to make mediocre dancers seem brilliant and strong and brilliant stylists seem weird and distorted."

According to Cole, "Dance numbers usually occur after a considerable amount of the story has been told in medium and close shots with intermittent long shots to establish geography or cover violent movement. Since there is usually a minimum of movement in a musical picture outside of the dance numbers, it means that there has been a minimum of long shots. Thus, the audience has become conditioned to the communication by large half-figures and even larger heads.

Florence Lessing in one of the dances from the current Broadway stage success, Kismet. *The music for which has been taken from Borodin's* Prince Igor.

When the dancer arrives with his necessity for full figure photography, he inevitably becomes small in scale and begins to lose importance with the audience unless we move in to a half-figure, at which point our movement quality becomes vitiated and almost non-existent. For the screen, a soloist and a very small group can be handled successfully. Large groups lose their importance because of the distance necessary to keep them in the frame.

Opportunities too infrequent

"The opportunities for pure dance as such, have been, up to now, very scarce. Dancing on the screen is usually the development of a song number. If the songwriter has his way, it will be confined to a rhythmic charade of his lyrics. There are not many Rodgers and Hammersteins who are eager to write lyric theatre for the films in which 'the play is the thing.' Most have their eye on record sales and radio performances. What is suitable for a non-visual medium with an adolescent audience is pre-eminently unsuited for a visual medium that is trying to reach a more mature audience."

"For the immediate future," concludes Jack Cole, "there needs to be a greater coordination between writer, director and dance director. For musical pictures the dance director, a properly equipped one—very rare, should be the director so that the picture as a whole sings and dances and is not a unit intermittently interrupted by more or less fitted-in musical and dance interludes. Characters, situations, points of view that allow for fantasy, imagination, vitality and movement to communicate and be an integral part of the structure rather than a decorative embellishment."

NEW RECORDS

Chabrier in the ballet

Suite Pastorale, (Chabrier); *Jeux d'Enfants*—Petite Suite; *La Jolie Fille de Perth*—Suite. (Bizet) Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Edouard Lindenberg.) Decca LXT2860. 1 12in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

DURING his lifetime, Emmanuel Chabrier was intensely interested in developments in the other arts as well as in music and had many friends among leading writers and painters. On his death in 1894, he left behind a superb collection of French impressionist paintings, one of which was Manet's famous *Bar aux Folies-Bergère.*

Was it only a coincidence then that when, some forty years later, that picture served as the inspiration for the well-known ballet of the same name, it was to Chabrier's music that Ninette de Valois turned?

De Valois' ballet, like Balanchine's unforgettable *Cotillon* which preceded it by two years, made most use of the Suite Pastorale (Chabrier's own orchestrations of four of his *Dix Pieces Pittoresques* for piano). Both ballets left out the third movement, *Sous Bois* and added others, orchestrated by Constant Lambert and Vittorio Rieti respectively. More recently the *Suite Pastorale* has served as the basis for Petit's *Ballabile* (which alone makes use of the *Sous Bois* movement), while the *Idylle* and *Scherzo valse* movements form part of Gore's *Light Fantastic.*

The *Suite* therefore is one of those musical works, like Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture,* that has an irresistible fascination for choreographers. And no wonder—for as in so much of Chabrier's orchestral music, infectious rhythms and elegant light-hearted gaiety predominate in subtle variety and supply the ideal ingredients for a ballet of the French *soufflé* type.

The four movements are given a perfect performance on this record, Edouard Lindenberg conducting with all the lightness of touch necessary to capture all those qualities in the music that were once aptly described by a depressed dancer in the midst of an over-extended tour as " a tonic against tiredness and boredom." The recording is as highly civilised as the performance and gives a superb account of the beautifully played woodwind detail.

On the reverse are equally sympathetic performances of the suite from Bizet's opera, *The Fair Maid of Perth,* which includes the *Dance Bohèmienne,* sometimes also used as ballet music in modern productions of *Carmen,* and of the same composer's delightful *Jeux d'Enfants.* Diaghilev first had the idea of using the latter for " a surrealist *Boutique,*" a project which Massine carried out so captivatingly some years after the great man's death. Performance and recording are here at the same high standard.

Planets revealed

The Planets (Holst) Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, members of London Philharmonic Choir (Sir Adrian Boult). Nixa NLP903. 1 12 in. LP, 36*s.* 5½*d.*

THOSE for whom Tudor's *The Planets* comes as high on their lists of neglected masterpieces by British choreographers as it does on mine, will certainly want this outstandingly successful recording of the complete suite.

Tudor used only the movements headed *Mars, the Bringer of War; Venus, the Bringer of Peace; Mercury, the Winged Messenger* and *Neptune, the Mystic,* reversing the order of the first two. How a young apprentice dancer-choreographer of 25 succeeded in grasping the full psychological significance of Holst's imaginative score, translating the predominating mood of each of his four chosen movements into choreography is a mystery as unfathomable as *Neptune* itself.

The superb performance on this record will come as a revelation to those who have only heard the music scaled down to the resources of a ballet orchestra and the recording is one of the most brilliantly realistic that has yet been achieved. Listening to the complete suite makes one regret that nobody has thought of commissioning a second edition of the ballet incorporating *Jupiter the Bringer of Jollity; Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age;* and *Uranus, the Magician.*

David Hunt

Ballet is not dancing

The first of a series of articles examining how much of the principles laid down by Jean-George Noverre, in his *Letters on Dancing and on the Ballet*, have been adhered to today.

by A. V. COTON

EVERY complicated and long-drawn-out ballet which does not explain to me, simply and clearly, the action which it represents, the plot of which I cannot follow without constant reference to the programme —every ballet of which I do not understand the plan, which does not afford me an introduction, plot and climax—will be no more, in my opinion, than a simple entertainment based on dancing, more or less well executed. It will move me but little, since it will be expressionless and devoid of action and interest.

THESE words express an attitude towards ballet with which few would quarrel and suggest a yardstick by means of which every balletgoer can honestly and in fullest detail measure the worth of every ballet he sees.

Today in the western world—probably equally so in Russia—we enjoy, and take pride in the fact of sharing in, the great renaissance of ballet that this century has brought forth.

Critics, commentators and historians of every degree of taste have published millions of words in the past quarter of a century emphasising the fact that ballet enjoys its present popularity because it has developed a fresh strength since the day when Diaghilev began pioneering the new type of Russian Ballet over forty years ago.

The frequently quoted reason given for the new look that ballet was made to wear after the year 1909, is the new artistic alignment of talents which, by bringing together the best notions of choreographer, designer and composer, could not fail to result in works of theatrical dancing which would show a unity of dance-style, choreographic form, decorative support and musical freshness. It was by a judicious use of this formula that Diaghilev enabled teams of collaborators to create such works as *Firebird, Cleopatra, Petrouchka, Daphnis and Chloe, Le Sacre du Printemps,* and later, *La Boutique Fantasque, Le Tricorne, Les Noces, Les Biches, Les Matelots.*

Differences of opinion between scenarist, choreographer and artistic director, for example, would occasionally vary the formula and a new ballet would be created on already-written music; but that music would have been chosen because both its length and atmosphere fitted it for the subject under discussion.

Diaghilev's formula weakened

It was inevitable that the mere fact of ballet becoming popular would lead to an increase in the rate of output of ballets; and once other companies, either new or revived, began to share in the renaissance opened by Diaghilev and his artistic teams, the actual number of ballets created led to a progressive weakening of the formula of "unified creation."

For business reasons every ballet company had to fulfil a given number of performances yearly in order to keep alive (at least until the backer's funds had become exhausted), and gradually choreographers and artistic directors—the only individuals in a position to make policy—acquiesced in the growing practice of making ballets which dispensed less and less with the consultative services of designers, composers and scenarists.

Too often the choreographer was his own scenarist, chose music which happened to fit approximately to his dance conception, awarded the designing to a painter probably totally lacking theatre experience and without any special knowledge of the intricacies of designing for dancing.

This process has gone on for so long, and today there are so few companies capable, or interested, in guiding young composers and designers towards a proper knowledge of ballet's needs, that we, the public, accept most new ballets resignedly even though their most obvious quality is a lack of proper integration of scene design, costume design, lighting, music, dance form and choreographic idea.

This practice of creating works of ballet too hurriedly and with too little careful planning of the several arts and crafts involved, is obvious in most of today's repertoires. The new ballet which shows that its several parts have been planned in relation to one another, so that the whole reveals itself as a simple yet inspiring performance, is a rarity in any company.

Music dictates ballet length

The theory advanced in some circles which prophesies an inevitable return to the full-length ballet on the 19th century model has been leading to a kind of ballet of indefinite length, a length more often than not conditioned, not by plot requirements, but by the length of the music chosen. These generally are the kinds of ballet which need elaborate explanations in programme notes, wherein the relations between characters and the meaning of their actions has to be explained verbally before the spectator can grasp visually what is supposed to be taking place.

One or two examples of this kind of elaborately-plotted ballet is, of course, to be expected in a modern repertoire which has to encompass lyric, comic, tragic, farcical and noble examples of dance works in order to please a public of extremely eclectic tastes. But usually that eclecticism of taste is channelled along lines which lead to an appreciation only of dancing, and which rarely involves a taste for the endless richnesses of choreographic forms, of music-and-movement correlations, of the subleties that excellent designing, stagecraft and lighting can confer upon character-building and eye-rewarding pictures of movement.

Most of today's audience is used to the ballet needing an involved essay in the programme to explain what it is about because it has rarely met a modern ballet composed according to Fokine's fifty-year-old formula.

Fokine prophesied decline

When Fokine insisted that ballet would only survive the reformation he helped to launch if it were made according to certain absolute and inevitable rules he was pointing out only what was obvious. Ballet's history is clearly recorded as a series of advances and declines, the advances being marked by the intelligent exploitation of sound artistic principles and the declines occupying the periods in which choreographic creativity was at a low ebb.

The position today, wherein an increasing number of ballets by all companies is made without careful assembly of balanced parts, represents—whether we like it or not—the beginning of a decline. For it has been made clear by the already-past achievements of the Fokine Age that it is not enough that choreographers of originality shall exist; in order to function most beneficially they must be in contact with, and must exert influence upon, both designers and composers of an equal degree of originality.

Today the picture of the creative forces guiding all the important ballet-making groups is out of perspective; a small number of strongly original choreographers produce one, two or more works yearly; behind them a vast regiment of apprentice choreographers is in rivalry with an equal number of skilful dance-arrangers using a small repertory of production tricks. There are all too few original talents occupied in designing decor and costumes or in writing music absolutely suitable both for dancing and for the musical resources of the various companies.

No one can command that genius shall display itself anywhere, but high talent of the sort that can emerge into genius needs to be discovered, guided, nourished and occasionally obstructed and frustrated—not frustrated perpetually. No ballet-making system anywhere contains either the persons or the method which could develop such talents if they were forthcoming.

Possibly the only two occasions within this century's renaissance when such an organisation did exist were, during Diaghilev's reign and in more modest degree when De Mare allowed Jean Borlin full control of the Ballets Suedoises.

The whole point about the continuing success that ballet enjoys as a popular theatre-form lies in the overwhelming propaganda and publicity (much of it indirect, as in critical documents and histories) which insists that ballet's distinct difference from a mere show of dancing lies in the delicately balanced union of choreographic idea, dance-form, music and decor.

Fokine's great role was to clarify this artistic principle, then to put it into practice; the renaissance of our time was possible only because this basic formula was re-established in a majority of the ballets shown by the Diaghilev company.

Focus on the dancer

However much we can be grateful for the revival which, after 1930, led to the expansion of ballet activity over most of the world; and however much solid gratitude we can feel for those whose pioneering work established permanent companies in half-a-dozen countries, we have to deplore the hard and inescapable fact that the propaganda for ballet has focussed too much attention on the dancer.

Few directors have grasped that, essential though a school is for supplying raw dance material to the company, it is equally necessary to find some working method whereby choreographers, scenarists, designers and composers, can also be bred.

At present a fledgling choreographer may present an interesting new idea in a trial programme, which may well be overlooked by those who can further his activities. Similarly it is purely by luck or some crazy accident that a composer, designer or scenarist with a worthwhile idea can have it discussed objectively in a way that can lead to his services being channelled into a ballet company.

Hence we have the current ideology of ballet, which does not vary a great deal

Continued on page nineteen

A scene from Borge Ralov's The Courtesan. *The Courtesan (Kirsten Ralov) is seen on the right. Her first love (Erik Bruhn) is in the centre.*

The Courtesan (Kirsten Ralov) with Fredbjorn Bjornsson.

The Danish Festival '54

NEW WORKS AND OLD IN COPENHAGEN

by CLIVE BARNES

Photographed by Mydtskov

THE COURTESAN

First given by the Royal Danish Ballet at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, in 1953. Ballet, based on a Chinese story of Po Chü-i, by Henrik Bloch. Choreography by Borge Ralov. Music by Niels Viggo Bentzon. Costumes and decor by Henrik Bloch.

THE hard returns obtained by a lady of easy virtue is not, by any means, a new subject for drama. Henrik Bloch's ballet, *The Courtesan,* takes its novelty more from its oriental setting than in theme, but novelty is not always an asset and old themes are usually good ones.

Based on a story by the Chinese Po Chü-i, the ballet opens with two friends taking their leave of one another. Sadly sailing down a river on their last evening together, they come across a veiled woman plaintively playing on a lute. The woman, a middle-aged courtesan, tells the friends of her life: her early training in the art of pleasing men, the gifts that were showered upon her in her youth, the gradual loss of her looks, her marriage to a poor merchant and, finally, of his desertion of her. A Chinese Moll Flanders lamenting the melted joys of yesterday.

The narrative is unfortunate in starting out on the wrong foot. The two friends, with whom the work opens, are irrelevant to the subject; the flash-back treatment (rarely effective in ballet) so necessitated, leads inevitably to an anti-climax.

The abrupt introduction, in the middle of the ballet, of the Courtesan's brother—even though he has the grace to get promptly killed in the wars—is almost unnecessary. This brief episode is incidental to the narrative thread and is not developed as a subplot.

Borge Ralov's choreography has a few interesting moments, but then it would be difficult for a distinguished dancer of his experience to compose a ballet of such seemingly immense length that completely lacked interest. Even the Sahara has an occasional oasis.

His choreography can spring to life, as in the eccentric role of the Dancing Master (performed at the festival by Ralov himself, but originally danced by Niels Bjorn Larsen)

Flemming Beck as the Courtesan's brother. He made a favourable impression in this role and showed potentiality of becoming one of the future male stars of the Royal Danish Ballet.

and the brilliantly descriptive lecherous dances for Frank Shaufuss and Svend Erik Jensen; but on the whole it is more conducive to sleep than wonderment.

The main faults are that it does not make the story clear, that it does not consistently sustain the Chinese atmosphere and that it does not grow out of the music. In fact, the choreographer, despite an evident talent, appeared to be out of sympathy with the project.

The costumes and decor by Henrik Bloch himself, were presumably based on Chinese water-colours. Stylistically good, they do not add up to a very effective form of stage decoration. The vast backcloth—an impressionistic landscape—is lost against the colourful costumes.

The music of the contemporary Danish composer, Niels Viggo Bentzon, although lacking something in oriental feeling, is danceable and achieves a fine rhythmic climax. It is incredibly difficult for a Western composer to produce an "oriental" score that conveys the East and without sounding like a selection from *Chu Chin Chow*—Bentzon has certainly spared us that.

Though the work was disappointing as a Festival offering from such a company, it was very well performed. Borge Ralov, Jensen and Shaufuss were all most convincingly lecherous, Bruhn had a chill ardour as the first love, while young Flemming Beck made a favourable impression in the brief role of the brother.

The onus of the ballet fell on the Courtesan herself, Kirsten Ralov. Not off the stage for a moment, Ralov was tenderly pathetic in her exhausting role. Perhaps she was not quite passionate enough in either manner or appearance for a courtesan, but

Left: Erik Bruhn as the disillusioned young student in Parisiana.

Above: On the banks of the Seine he is surrounded by courting couples.

then they may order such things differently in China. I have not been there, nor do I imagine, has anyone connected with this ballet.

PARISIANA

First given by the Royal Danish Ballet at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, in 1953. Ballet in three scenes by Birger Bartholin. Music by Germaine Tailleferre. Designed by Jean-Luc de Rudder. Choreography by Birger Bartholin.

COPENHAGEN has so much in common, spiritually and temperamentally, with Paris that a work with a Parisian background seems right and natural in a Danish Ballet Festival.

Birger Bartholin, one of the two best-known modern Danish choreographers, has chosen his theme for *Parisiana* with care. A young foreign student, newly arrived in Paris, unsuccessfully tries to capture the authentic Parisian atmosphere he has dreamt about.

Disappointed and disillusioned, he wanders to the banks of the Seine. There in the shadow of one of the arches, a kindly old artist, noticing the boy's bewilderment, introduces him to a young Parisian girl. They dance and the boy, in his happiness, sees her as the embodiment of his Paris. Suddenly he realises that his partner is nothing more than a young vagabond girl.

However, his depression has been dispelled and he invites some courting couples to follow him to an artist's cafe. Here the old artist introduces him to another girl, who becomes in his eyes the same exquisite creature with whom he danced under the arches—the incarnation of *la belle parisienne*. He has found Paris.

That this theme in the hands of, let us say, Petit, Thiriet and Clavé, could have made an enchanting ballet, only makes one regret the more that as treated by Bartholin and his collaborators the ballet is a dull as flat Vichy water. No one would pretend that Massine's *Gaité Parisienne*, a work not altogether dissimilar to *Parisiana* in theme, is one of the master's better conceptions; compared with Bartholin's ballet, it is a riot of wit and invention.

The first scene is straggling and choreographically mediocre. The dancers are given remarkably little dancing and are left to mime with all their consummate Danish skill. The last scene concludes with a finale of astonishing banality: Can-can girls, waiters, cocottes and mashers are all thrown together in a job-lot of choreographic *kitsch*.

Only in the middle scene, in the sustained *pas de deux* between the student and the vagabond girl, does Bartholin exhibit any talent rising above the ordinary.

The music by the French composer Germaine Tailleferre is uninspired. It captures the repetitiousness, but not the charm, of a Bal Musette concertina. Jean-Luc de Rudder's costumes are conventionally bright and, in the scene of the Seine arches he presents a stage-picture which, if not particularly evocative of Paris, has a welcome air of professionalism about it.

The dancers were all, I think without exception, good. Small marvellously executed character studies, of the type that has made Danish mime the envy of the ballet world, abounded. But, strangely enough, the only dancer who struck me as typically Parisian in style was Kjeld Noack. Full of gallic charm, he breezed through the ballet like a Serge Perrault. Bruhn, as the student, was brilliant; Schanne's individual personality (as the girl) cannot fail to be of interest in any role she undertakes.

THE failure of *Parisiana* and, to a slightly lesser extent, of *The Courtesan*, underlines the lesson of the fifth Danish Ballet Festival. This lesson is disturbing for all of us who have grown to love Denmark and her ballet company.

A national ballet should be both a living tradition and a creative force. In the former capacity the Royal Danish Ballet is conspicuously successful; in the latter it is not. Since Harald Lander's departure four years ago it would appear that the Danes have not produced one entirely new work worthy of their lovely opera house and magnificent tradition.

Before they can be ranked with the great ballet companies of the world, I feel certain they will have to obtain the full-time services of a master choreographer. A choreographer like Tudor, Robbins or Cranko, who could exploit their talents and explore their potentialities.

Deprived of contact with a first-rate creative hand the Danish company, even if it lovingly tenders its Bournonville repertory until it is blue in the face, will sink into something approaching provincial obscurity.

In an artist's cafe, the young student finds the Paris he always dreamt of. Bruhn is seen with Margrethe Schanne.

The dancers will be there, the well-kept museum of classics will be there, but what else? Bournonville has made the company interesting for the present, a choreographer of his stature must perform the same service for the future.

SYMPHONY IN C

First given by the Royal Danish Ballet at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, in 1952. Choreography by George Balanchine. Music, Bizet. Decor and costumes, Ove Chr Petersen.

THE proof of the value of having the choreography of a great modern master in the repertoire is in the production of Balanchine's *Symphony in C*. I can think of no better living illustration of the fascinating topic of ballet style than would be provided by a performance of *Le Palais de Cristal, Symphony in C* and *Symfoni i C* given by the Paris Opéra, New York City Ballet and the Royal Danish Ballet respectively.

The present revival is important, not only for the opportunity it offers for contrasting styles, but because it is the first full-length ballet in history to be mounted on a company by means of Laban Dance-Notation. Balanchine has yet to see the production as it was mounted on his behalf by Vida Brown (Ballet Mistress of New York City Ballet).

On the whole it appears to be an accurate revival, but some of the magic touches of the American production have dissipated. Whether this is the fault of Dance Notation or whether it is due to the difficulty the largely Bournonville-trained Danish dancers have had in assimilating the American classic style is not apparent.

Seeing this production one realises how truly the American neo-classic style has become an actuality. *Symphony in C* (somewhat revised from the original *Le Palais de Cristal* as first mounted in Paris) is as American in its way as *Fancy Free*. The open-ness and freedom of the movements, the brassy athleticism, the sinewy choreographic patterns, all belong to American ballet.

The soft rounded style of the Danes is not always in accordance with the ballet, nor does the work (the Third Movement apart) exhibit their cardinal virtue of bouncy resilience.

A few of the dancers, notably Erik Bruhn and Mette Mollerop, overcame these disadvantages and produced the authentic bravura touch. Mona Vangsaa danced extremely well in the Second Movement, but missed the emotional content that Tanaquil Le Clercq infused into the same movement.

An interesting feature of the production was the comment it tacitly made on the theory that Balanchine is less able to compose for men than for women. In this work, as danced by the Danes, the men showed up as equal or even superior to the women. When working with New York City Ballet Balanchine, in this respect, obviously lacks not the will but the way.

The decors and costumes by Ove Chr Petersen were the most suitable yet awarded to the ballet. Not so sumptuous as Leonore Fini's at the Opéra, not so spartan as the City Ballet's uniform yellow-brown jerkins and white tu-tus. These new designs struck just the right note.

Not so much could be said of the orchestra under John Frandsen. His *tempi* were not to my taste, nor would they have been, judging from the accompaniment to City Ballet's production, to Mr. Balanchine's.

OTHER WORKS

ALTHOUGH the failure of the two new ballets threw a threatening shadow over the whole festival, there was much to admire in the remainder of the repertory.

The final movement of Balanchine's Symphony in C. *(L. to R.) Frank Shaufuss and Margrethe Schanne. Borge Ralov and Mona Vangsaa. Erik Bruhn and Inge Sand. Stanley Williams and Kirsten Ralov.*

Among the ballets that were a success in London last year, *La Sylphide* (Schanne, Bruhn, Karstens) and *Graduation Ball* (Sand, Bjornsson, Mollerop and Kronstam) remained attractive.

Coppelia (Sand, Bjornsson and Larsen), however, after a good first act was not so well danced as previously; the whole production does not appear to be so well in keeping with the music as the latest Sadler's Wells revival. Nevertheless, as Dr. Coppelius, Larsen gives a mime performance without equal in Western ballet today. Every detail is etched on my memory.

Three ballets that were not so successful in London appear far better in their proper setting in Det Kongelige Teater. Galleotti's amusing *Amors og Balletmesterens Luner* (*Les Caprices du Cupidon*), with its vivacious finale, gains considerably away from Covent Garden; as does Bournonville's *Et Folkesagn*.

Lander's *Qarrtsiluni* is too static ever to appeal to me personally, but restored to its original decor (a special drop-cloth was used in London), it has an artistic validity and is, at times, impressive.

Of the works not yet seen in London, undoubtedly the most rewarding are the two Fokine revivals: *Les Sylphides* (called *Chopiniana* in Copenhagen) and *Petrouchka*. Although *Chopiniana* is disfigured by an ugly setting and a wildly inappropriate overture, the company and soloists (Shaufuss, Vangsaa, Schanne and Kirsten Ralov) danced well.

Their *Petrouchka* is without doubt the best version now extant. Borge Ralov gives a superb portrayal of the puppet hero; this performance alone would place him in the forefront of his contemporaries. Equally effective are Svend Erik Jensen (a fine artist in everything) as the Blackamoor, Kirsten Ralov as the Ballerina and Niels Bjorn Larsen as the Charlatan.

Also of considerable interest was the company's production of *Giselle*. This cannot compare with *La Sylphide* or *Et Folkesagn*; nor does the version used (originally mounted, I believe, by Volinine) compare well choreographically with the versions familiar in England. However, it does serve to frame good performances by Schanne in the title role (better in the first act than most, as good in the second act as many), Borge Ralov as Albrecht (Dolin vintage and very sensitive), Vangsaa as Myrthe (less autocratic than is now fashionable), and the mimes Larsen and Karstens (both quite exceptional as Hilarion and Berthe respectively).

The production of *Le Beau Danube* had spirit and was distinguished by careful playing in the minor parts, but its verve was Danish rather than "Ballet Russe." Schaufuss danced and partnered well as the Hussar, but was far too Little Lord Fauntleroy in his characterisation.

Vangsaa made a good-hearted Street Dancer and Bjornsson was more than acceptable as the King of the Dandies. But the best performance came from Poul Vessel as the Strong Man. Here is an artist of the type that only the Danes can breed.

Frank Shaufuss' ambitious but slight ballet, *Idolon*, fills me with no wish to see it again, even though Vangsaa and Bruhn danced the unmusical choreography with more polish than it merited. This work to Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* challenges immediate and damaging comparison with Balanchine's famous *Serenade*.

Erik Bruhn's *Concertette* is just as suicidally conceived. Set to the Moreton Gould music used by Robbins for *Interplay*, it stands as a souvenir of his sojourn with American Ballet Theatre. All he has taken from *Interplay* is the music and, to a certain extent, the style. The ballet itself, with an interesting setting by Jorgen Espen-Hansen, is inventive and shows musical feeling. Bruhn should be encouraged to try again as he has the makings of a choreographer. The work was well danced by Sand, Bjornsson, Mollerop and, making his solo debut, the young promising Flemming Flindt.

The programmes were completed (I unfortunately missed the final performance of *Dream Pictures* and *Napoli*) by two performances of the *Black Swan pas de deux*. Sand was miscast in this; Vangsaa, though a little dull, being the preferable Odile. Shaufuss partnered Vangsaa most competently, but it was Bruhn who took the final laurels. He is definitely improving. Now he shows, in addition to his technique and good looks, a musical sensitivity.

curtain up!

Festival Ballet's homage to Diaghilev in Barcelona. The group around Diaghilev's picture after the performance at the Liceo Opera House: Gilpin, Wright, Krassovska, Briansky and Dolin.
Photo: Marti

Compensations for disappointment

IT must have been disappointing for the Soviet dancers not appearing in Paris. Several times a company of this size has almost appeared in Western Europe but never can it have been so close as this; many members of the audience were already dressed for the first performance when it was cancelled.

However there were some compensations for the dancers who, between rehearsals, made expeditions to various places by coach and also managed to see the shops and make some purchases, mainly of scent and books on the ballet! They also saw Markova dance and loudly praised her artistry and the beauty of her arms and hands.

One curious angle on the behaviour of the Press of the Western democracies must have amused them enormously. A French Sunday paper published a full account of the company's first performance which never took place. After that, we should imagine that not one of them will believe anything they read in the papers.

Classic returns after 110 years

IT is strange to think that *La Esmeralda*, which Festival Ballet will present on the first night of their season at the Royal Festival Hall, actually received its first performance in London, at Her Majesty's Theatre. That was 110 years ago, and although the work was popular for a time, it has long been neglected here, although it remained a great favourite in Russia, even after the Revolution.

The story is based, of course, on Victor Hugo's famous novel about Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre Dame, but the original choreographer, Perrot, received much praise for his skilful adaptation of the complicated plot into a suitable scenario.

The Festival Ballet revival will gain interest from the fact that it offers us at last a chance to hear a full-length score by Pugni, who is already represented in the repertory by his music for *The Pas de Quatre*. We have long suspected that nineteenth century ballet composers like Pugni, Minkus and Drigo could not possibly deserve all the contempt that is showered upon them. Now we shall know the truth at last.

Ballet-watching clothes again

NOT long ago, one of our editorials was devoted to the question of dressing suitably for the theatre. This seems to have been misinterpreted by many people who were under the impression that we felt that dinner-jackets and tails were the only suitable garb for watching ballet. Nothing could have been farther from our minds; we only asked people to, at least, be neat and tidy.

At the Rome Opera House, it seems, we were taken too literally because no less a person than Igor Stravinsky was prevented from entering because he was not in evening dress.

How different we are at Covent Garden. Beverley Baxter in the *Sunday Express* recently wrote: "The last time I wore tails at Covent Garden a man asked me where the lavatory was. He knew I must be some kind of official."

Jugoslavs, born dancers?

SOMEWHAT rashly, a recent souvenir programme described a very talented young artist as, "a Jugoslav; that is to say, a born male dancer." The logic of this remark is a little doubtful—we had never, for instance, heard that Marshal Tito was noted for his dancing. The nicest comment was made by a French male dancer who happened to be in the audience. "So he's a *born* dancer? Myself, I prefer them *trained*."

Wedding rings in unmarried roles

THE sight of a wedding ring glittering on stage is always distracting. Some dancers cover their ring with sticking plaster rather than remove it. Though in a leading role this is not altogether satisfactory, especially in a part such as Giselle, or any other unmarried girl, when frequent attention is drawn to the ring-finger by the familiar mime gesture for "marriage." Many people, we know, dislike removing a wedding ring. But a true artist will subordinate everything else to perfect a performance in every detail.

When a ballet is not

EVERYONE knows about the English ballet company which, confusing seniority with superiority, steadfastly refuses to be called "junior." Modern dancers are equally touchy when anyone happens to call their works "ballets." In the back of recent Covent Garden programmes has appeared an advertisement for a recording of the music for Martha Graham's *Letter to the World*.

No harm in this, of course—except that the work is quite blatantly advertised as a "ballet suite." Somebody better look out: international incidents have been caused by trifles no more important than this!

Dancers very off duty

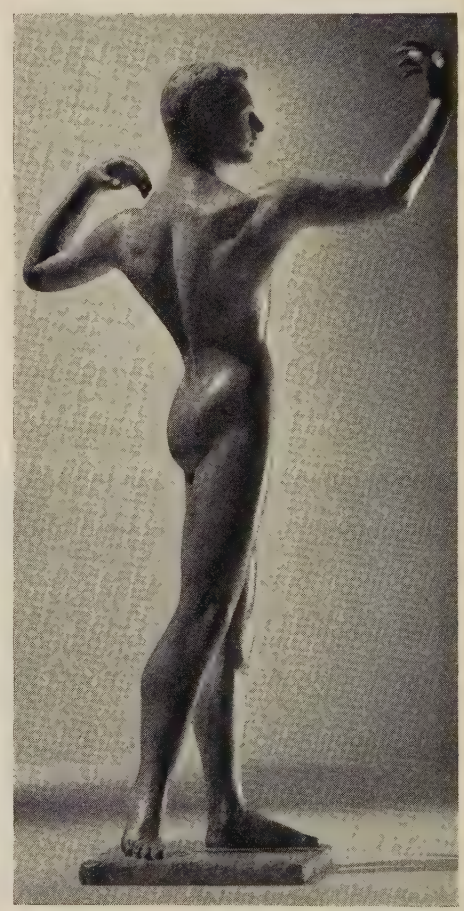
IT cannot be stressed enough that the behaviour of dancers off stage is as important as their performance on stage. On the first night of the Moscow State Dancers at the Stoll Theatre, two dancers of the Sadler's Wells Ballet stood up in the middle of the finale and struggled out past a whole row of people. An action discourteous to the artists on the stage and disturbing to other members of the audience. As both dancers were easily recognisable, it could only bring discredit on the company they have the honour to serve.

Not only this but there is a growing tendency for members of one company to make extremely disparaging remarks about another company in loud voices during intervals. Some dancers seem to forget that as soon as they have the privilege of appearing on the stage before an audience they immediately become people of certain importance. There is a large public who spend most evenings in the bars of theatres listening to what dancers have to say about other dancers and then repeating everything, with embroideries, to their friends.

The poor sister's triumph

WE commented recently on the value of opera ballets in providing experience for young choreographers. It is very rare, however, for an opera ballet to evoke much enthusiasm from an audience whose main interest after all is in the singing. The revival of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Snow-Maiden at* Sadler's Wells nevertheless had an opera audience cheering the dances.

Much of the credit for this unexpected tribute must go to Ninette de Valois who



A dancer in bronze. George Zoritch sculpted by Alan Jarvis. Zoritch has for the past year been the principal dancer in Ana Magnani's revue in Italy. He is also principal dancer in the film, Helen of Troy, *now being made in Rome.* *Photo: Roy Round*

arranged the choreography of the Tumblers' dance. Even more credit, however, must go to the spirited performance of Ray Powell as the leading Tumbler. Powell seems often in danger of being overlooked at Covent Garden, but no one could possibly overlook such a performance.

He danced longest season—in Lima

NICHOLAI POLAJENKO, who has joined Festival Ballet, will be remembered by many readers for his appearances in London with Les Ballets des Champ-Elysées at the Prince's Theatre. Since then he has danced in America, appearing recently with a former guest artist of Festival Ballet, Tatiana Grantzeva. Together they gave what is, we hear, the longest season of ballet ever known in Lima, Peru—the grand total of nine performances breaking the local record!

Beneath contempt

"I WONDER why parents waste their money on such nonsense as ballet dancing? If children spent less time on such rubbish and more on the three Rs it would be better for everyone."

The speaker? A judge at Brentford County Court. No comment on our part—it might sound too much like contempt of court.

Birch trees and flowers

ONE of the most heartening scenes took place at the Stoll Theatre on the last night of the season of the Beryozka dance company from Moscow, when the stage was literally showered with flowers from the boxes adjoining. It took a troupe of modern young ladies from the U.S.S.R. to restore such a delightfully old-world custom!

The artistic director and choreographer of the company, Nadezhda Nadezhdina, in a curtain speech, thanked the London audience and said that she, and all the dancers, hoped soon to see British artists performing in Moscow. With this sentiment we can all agree—nothing but good can come of a widening of artistic contacts in both countries.

Poor little rich girl?

A REPORT from Hollywood tells how Leslie Caron surprised a burglar in her home during the shooting of her current film, in which most of the Ballets de Paris company are appearing.

The account tells how the thief fled on seeing her. His sole booty was a gold-rimmed purse, worth nearly £100 but containing no money.

A jolly good wheeze

IN a recent competition for children, the competitors were asked to suggest the best way of spending the prize money of £1 should they be fortunate enough to win it. The first prize went to the bright lad who said he would go to Covent Garden to see Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes. We hope he enjoyed his prize.

Dancing in the coalfields

FOLLOWING the example set by the dancers of the Paris Opéra, Sadler's Wells dancers are now taking small groups to provincial cities and places where a big company can never play. Fonteyn, Somes and Ashton will be going to the Granada Festival in July and later a small group may appear for flying matinees in the English provinces.

Elvin has formed a small group with John Field, Peter Clegg, Angela Walton and three other dancers, possibly from the Sadler's Wells School. They start a tour on June 29 of South Wales. They will dance in mining areas where ballet has never been seen. It seems to be an excellent idea, which we hope will receive every encouragement.

Bells for South Africans

CONGRATULATIONS to two young dancers of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, Patricia Miller and Dudley Davies, who have announced their engagement during the company's tour of South Africa. Both of them come from South Africa.

One newspaper, breaking the news of the engagement, implied that Patricia Miller was quite good enough to dance at Covent Garden. This is certainly true—but why should a good dancer not appear at Sadler's Wells too?

Granada in the home

"SPANISH dancing is tremendously exhilarating particularly gipsy dancing. I have been learning for a year, and strongly recommend it to anyone who wants a change. The main difficulty is to fit in the castanets with the movements of the arms and legs.

Later come complications, like playing a 'three' rhythm with the castanets to a 'five' rhythm step. With a guitarist, a glass of wine and a circle of friends, I find that suddenly the spirit of the dance captures me. A few claps of the hands and I am completely possessed by the music and rhythm. The dance is an entertainment to watch, with its grace and dignity, and the proud, masculine bearing of the men."

Miss Denise Service, of Chiswick, in *Illustrated* (April 3).

And very lucky she is. Had we been learning gipsy dancing for only a year we should certainly not have a circle of friends. No, not even a glass of wine nor our masculine bearing would keep them around our camp fire.

When the Queen's away—

"*DANUBE*, which closed the night's programme, shared honours between Krassovska's Street Dancer, Beriosoff's ripe Music-Hall Athlete and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother yesterday held the third of Keith Beckett's Impressario. Gilpin's the six investitures she is holding during the Queen's absence on the Commonwealth tour . . . ."

Irish Times.

All of which makes the Queen's return from her Commonwealth tour even more welcome.

happy birthday to...

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Dancer you will know

In Bar aux Folies-Bergère
Photo: Roy Round

ANN HORN

BORN in London in 1931. *Trained principally at the Rambert School, and joined the Ballet Rambert in* 1949. *She soon attracted attention and for the past few years has been a principal soloist with the company.*

Principal creation: *Contention in* Fate's Revenge.

Principal roles: *Spanish Dance in* Casse Noisette; *Leading Swan in* Swan Lake; *Giselle (Act I only) and Myrthe in* Giselle; *Valse and Prelude in* Les Sylphides; *Debutante in* Facade; *Ballerina from Paris in* Gala Performance; *2nd Song in* Dark Elegies: *Episode in his Past in* Jardin aux Lilas; *Bolero in* Soiree Musicale; *Dancer in* Fireflies; *Aimee in* Winter Night; *La Gouloue in* Bar aux Folies Bergeres; *leading dancer in* Movimientos.

THE phrase Rambert soloist has, over the course of the last three decades, come to imply a specific type of dancer. The splendid opportunities offered by the Rambert repertory tend to develop versatility, artistry and, above all, personality.

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She has played Giselle in the first act of *Giselle* with some distinction, and nowadays makes a notable successor to the Myrthes of Joyce Graeme and Margaret Hill, who earlier distinguished the Rambert *Giselle*.

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NEW BOOKS

Nijinsky's last performance

The Crystal Salt Cellar, by Maurice Sandoz. (Guildford Press, 8*s.* 6*d.*)

IN the fever of celebrating the twenty-five years since Diaghilev died we find ourselves clutching avidly at any straw that will give us further clues as to the real person which lay beneath that somewhat forbidding frame.

Maurice Sandoz' book is really a number of encounters with some famous people he has met, including Ronald Firbank, Camille Sain-Saëns and so on. The reason the book has a particular interest to ballet is for the two chapters on Diaghilev and Nijinsky.

Sandoz visited Diaghilev in Lausanne in 1917, a visit which had Ansermet, Isadora Duncan and Massine thrown in for good measure. As they drink the burgundy and eat the crystallised cherries belonging to the ladies from whom Diaghilev rented the villa, the characters emerge with red blood coursing through their veins. In just a few sentences it is more possible to realise what they were like than in a whole welter of descriptive prose.

More important, however, is the chapter on Nijinsky's last public performance on this earth—at the Suvretta Hotel in St. Moritz. It differs, as the author states, slightly from that of Mme. Nijinsky in her book. Which is the correct version nobody will probably ever know. I would like to think that Maurice Sandoz' version of this tragic occasion becomes the accepted one. It is a most fair and human document, almost unbearably poignant.

The Peacock, but not in colour

The Muscovite Peacock, by Raymond Lister, with a memoir by Simon Lissim. (The Golden Head Press, 2 *gns.*)

IT has become the fashion, in the past few years, for people who never saw the work of Léon Bakst when it was being properly presented, to decry his designs as being old-fashioned and *passé*. The worst offenders have often been designers themselves. But all those who feel this way are merely making excuses for their own inability and the general mediocre level of designing as a whole.

This century has not yet produced another designer of Bakst's calibre: he stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries, those who preceded and followed him. His work has a splendour and magnificence of conception and colour unequalled in the whole history of theatre designing.

This new study of his art by Raymond Lister gives a faint indication of the glow of Bakst's work, but then words really fail to do him full justice. Only perfect colour reproductions can do this and here there is but one—the Columbine costume from the last act of *The Sleeping Princess*. The few monochrome reproductions at the end have been curiously chosen, particularly odd is the inclusion of a costume from *Le Légende de Joseph*, the authenticity of which is questionable. The notes on the works which Bakst designed would be more useful if more were written on the actual designing. However, much of what the author has to say is of importance and it is a pity that the high price of this slim, but admirably produced, volume is too high to bring it within the range of the average student's purse.

P.W.

Diaghilev's Spanish rhapsody

Manuel de Falla. His Life and Works, by Jaime Pahissa. (Museum Press, 5*s.*)

THIS new critical and biographical study of Manuel de Falla—the first in English since 1925—as well as becoming the standard reference book on Spain's most famous composer, throws interesting new light on certain aspects of the Diaghilev Ballet's "Spanish period" towards the end of the first world war, when, as Diaghilev later wrote, "we Russians were wanted so little that we were shut up in Spain for almost a year." *The Three Cornered Hat*, of course, was the outcome and the author (a fellow composer and close friend of Falla), writing with authority born of inside knowledge, clears up once and for all, the contradictions surrounding the ballet's origin.

The idea of using the story of Pedro de Alarcon's novel was Falla's. Although the music was first performed, not as a ballet, but as a mime with the title *El Corregidor y la Molinera*, the score had nevertheless been commissioned by Diaghilev in the first place; the war temporarily prevented the original plan from being carried out. The extent to which Falla relied on Diaghilev's advice in re-orchestrating and adapting the first version for the ballet can be judged from the fact that in the ten pages the author devotes to the subject (giving a detailed analysis, together with music examples and the sources of the folk material on which much of the score is based) Diaghilev's name is mentioned seventeen times, while only one passing reference is made to Massine.

There is an amusing story on page 175 of Diaghilev locking the shy composer in a box on the ballet's première to give the audience extra value for their money. This, and much else, makes interesting reading for those primarily concerned with ballet. And Pahissa has news too for Stravinsky (whom he does not seem to like very much): he was offered the job of turning Pergolesi pieces into the score for *Pulcinella* after Falla had turned it down.

It is fitting that the book's frontispiece is a photograph of Falla at the Alhambra with Massine (the latter wearing a white sombrero)—Falla's early acceptance as a composer of international importance was to a great extent due to his association with the Diaghilev company.

D.H.

Laban's notation for all

Labanotation, The System for Recording Movement, by Ann Hutchinson. (A New Directions Book, $3.50.)

COMING at a time when there is much increased interest internationally in dance notation, this definitive volume is bound to be of major interest to choreographers, dancers, teachers and students, as well as informed members of the dance public. Prepared by Ann Hutchinson, president of New York's Dance Notation Bureau, this volume offers a complete and lucid exposition of Laban's system for recording dance notation. In addition, there are more than 500 line drawings that illustrate the text.

The first section of the book deals with the basic approaches of the method and other fundamentals, such as the movements of the various parts of the body, their directions, durations and levels. The second part sets forth the subtleties, elaborations and refinements of movement. There is also an alphabet of basic symbols, as well as a glossary of supplementary symbols. This volume contains as well a brief history of dance notation and a foreword by Rudolf Laban.

Writing of the value of notation in the preface, George Balanchine says: "In making the grant to Miss Hutchinson for the preparation of this book, the Rockefeller Foundation demonstrated its belief in the value of this system of notation and in the influence which its widespread use will have on the future development of dance . . . . I believe that it will soon be universally recognised as being as necessary to the dancer as musical notation is to the musician."

Arthur Todd

Kschesinska gives a class

by DAVID HUNT

Mathilde Kschesinska giving barre work at the School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea. Photo: Paul Wilson

DURING the last week in May, students of the School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea had the privilege of working under Mathilde Kschesinska. The best way of experiencing what such an experience means to dancers is to join them.

In the former church hall in Chelsea where John Gregory and his wife Barbara Vernon have their school, thirty dancers waited in eager anticipation for the legendary Kschesinska to give a class.

Mathilde Kschesinska, Prima Ballerina Assoluta of Imperial Russia, who won for Russians supremacy in their own ballet from Italian dancers, favourite of a Czar, heiress of the tradition handed down through Johannsen from Vestris.

Into the hall she came, now an old lady, small, sensibly dressed in sombre colours, splashed with the pink of a single rose, dark eyes blazing with all the deep-set mystery of a Byzantine empress. The dancer who once electrified balletomanes at the Mariinsky with her spectacular *fouettés* limped in on a stick—an accident last year resulted in a broken leg.

"Bon jour, mes enfants!" A smile, radiantly warm, lit up her features. She went to the head of the *barre*, put away her stick, and at once something seemed to galvanise her.

Age and the years vanished as she immediately began to demonstrate the first *barre* exercise: "*Developpé en arabesque—fermez en cinquième devant—plié—tendu à la seconde—et un petit mouvement du bras comme ça*"—It was not just instruction, she did it. Fascinated, one watched the wonderful movement of the arm, a broad sweep that in one gesture crystallised all that one had gathered, from other teachers, of "the pure French School forgotten by the French themselves," as Legat once described it.

The impact of her enchanting personality is something I shall never forget: the unique blend of youthful *joie-de-vivre*, star quality ballerina authority and mellow humanism. She obviously adores children as much as she enjoys handing on to them the traditions of the art in which she has played so prominent a part.

The class was given in French (Kschesinska speaks no English) but this made no matter: the French terminology of ballet is, of course, international and although Barbara Vernon was on hand to act as interpreter, Kschesinska's wonderfully eloquent manner of expression leaves no doubt as to her meaning. As one of the male students put it afterwards, "I couldn't have translated a single word, but I understood absolutely everything she said."

Her methods are extremely individual: everything she gave had a certain rhythmic rubato and a musicality of phrasing that transcended the standard routine ballet accompaniments provided by the pianist and which was for me (apart from the revelation of her extraordinarily beautiful arm and head movements) the most fascinating aspect of her teaching.

Even the preliminary *barre* exercises took the form of miniature *enchaînements—enchaînements* in the true sense of the word, for Kschesinska uses the elements of the classical vocabulary as a poet uses words.

It is impossible to generalise from one class, especially as we were promised at the end that tomorrow's class would be completely different, but on this occasion I noted that her main concern is line, deportment and the actual quality of movement itself. The feeling for the ebb and flow of choreographic—as distinct from musical—impulse, one of the chief glories of the Russian style and the essential difference between expressive artistry and mere technical proficiency.

The class was a "mixed" one with some comparative beginners but although the standard of technique demanded was largely scaled down to the general ability, this was a class of perfection: she had not come to teach the ABC of the craft but to add refinement to whatever technique the students had already acquired.

There was little, therefore, of the humdrum routine of the usual ballet class—no audible counting or mechanical repetition. The class was as much a training in stagecraft as in the actual mechanics of the dance. Kschesinska insists that even in the learning of the rudiments of a new step, "Il faut *danser* chaque chose"—every movement must be enjoyed for itself and given with every ounce of feeling and expression of which the individual is capable.

Even in class, one must always think in terms of an audience. As she explained to a youngster struggling with the intricacies of a series of *fouettés*: "In the preparation, you are calling to your audience—See, I am about to give you something—and when you finish, you say—Voilà, that was all for you! And above all, you must learn not to show that what you have given caused you the slightest difficulty. Difficulties must always be hidden—cachées, cachées!"

She did not sit down once throughout the hour-and-three-quarters-long class (weary teachers please note), but remained at the *barre*, directing, encouraging and correcting with an animation and enthusiasm that was an inspiration.

That the students around me were well placed, danced with a freedom from mannerism and affectation and responded to Kschesinska's teaching with perceptive understanding, was as it should be in a school carrying the word Russian in its title and honoured by such exalted patronage.

Ballet is not dancing

by A. V. COTON

Continued from page twelve

whether in London, New York, Copenhagen, Milan or Sydney: 19th century ballets represent an ideal of classical dancing and must be shown as frameworks for great dancing talents; new ballets are built around the personality of a leading dancer; plenty of music exists which can be "turned into" a score for dancing, and new ballets often start as a result of someone hearing a gramophone record, not in response to a young musician's novel ideas.

Young painters assemble pleasing notions in the form of easel pictures, and a choreographer whose taste in painting is flattered decides that the painter is able to solve all the peculiar and complex problems of theatre-painting immediately.

The combination of these hit-or-miss methods of making ballets, and of the present ballet-going public's interest in the dancer and in nothing else, have led to the present condition of most ballet companies' repertoires. If we discount all classics, all self-explaining ballets of an abstract or divertissement nature, and all forms of Modern Dance and National dancing, something like three dozen are new ballets have been shown in London in the past fifteen months by English, French, Danish and American companies. Of these not a single one told its story fully or explained its characters completely through the dance and mime; each required a programme note to outline its plot and tell of the relations between the persons involved.

But whether first-class, merely competent, or just dull, they were judged by a majority of critics and audiences purely on their dance-content; today everyone who goes to ballet accepts the fact that ballet can no longer tell a story. And, however much we argue that ballet's appeal is primarily through the dancing we cannot sidetrack indefinitely all that has been created in the past history of ballet. That history came to be made only because the idea of ballet rested on the belief that story, music, decor and dancing had to be blended together to create whatever the choreographer had imagined.

Fokine, in re-asserting the principle of unified creation for a ballet, provided the framework on which the ballet of our time was architected; he derived his principles from a careful examination of the few good things, and the many corrupt and outworn things, in the ballet of his own day in Russia. He was re-stating, in strong and unequivocal terms, what had been noted by his great predecessor, the maitre-de-ballet Noverre, in 18th century France . . . and Jean-George Noverre's examination of the evils that had fallen upon ballet in his day was codified in his series of *Letters on Dancing and on Ballet*, a quotation from one of which forms the opening paragraph of this essay.

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

SADLER'S WELLS AT COVENT GARDEN

The return of Elvin

THE work chosen for the return of Violetta Elvin was appropriately enough *Ballet Imperial*. Appropriate not only because it shows Elvin at her best in a role she has made particularly her own, but also because its festive gala atmosphere reflects the keen pleasure felt by the audience in welcoming back after her misfortunes, one of the company's prima-ballerinas. It had the further advantage of providing a searching test of Elvin's fitness and happily it showed her at the peak of her form.

Last year she was showing a slight but regrettable tendency to substitute a film-star glamour for the radiance of a ballerina. This tendency appears to have been checked and she was dancing with the same grand simplicity that made her Odette-Odile unforgettable. The technical assurance of her dancing would in any circumstances have been brilliant, but the musicality with which she phrased Balanchine's poetically athletic choreography made it dazzling. We look forward keenly to seeing her once more in *The Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake* and *Homage to the Queen*.

Elvin was sympathetically partnered by John Field, and, among a good *pas de trois* cast, Desmond Doyle was outstanding. The *corps de ballet* danced this exacting work rather better than they have in the recent past, but many of the lines could do with tidying up. On the whole the men danced the ballet better than the women.

Tiresias revived

THE revival of *Tiresias* prompted me to look back at my very first notice of the ballet's premiere three years ago. I find that I then had much praise for Ashton's choreography in the work's second scene, but suggested that the first scene should be shortened and re-worked and that the last scene should be entirely omitted. Time has, except in one instance, altered my opinion of this work surprisingly little. Certainly I was too hard on Lambert's score when I described it as "dessicated and old-fashioned." While both adjectives are partially justified, I should also have pointed out that it is tuneful and danceable, if overprolonged.

I cannot swerve from my earlier view that Tiresias' changes of sex leading up to his blindness and subsequent gift of prophecy does not make a story suitable for translation into ballet terms, although I see now that it could be a sensation as a *Picture Post* serial

Isabel Lambert's costumes remain enchanting, as does her setting for the second scene, but it is difficult to see how she, who in the opera *Electra* has provided Covent Garden with its most magnificent decor since the war, could have come to have designed the ugly and tasteless settings she has provided for the ballet's first and last scenes.

The ballet is still too long, and some of Ashton's choreography suffers from a monotonous symmetry and evenness of mood and tempo, but during the inspired second scene all doubts about the work are suspended, as the choreography, music and decor come together in a unity unfortunately rare in British ballet. This section is as notable as the ballet's most rabid supporters claim it is.

As the female Tiresias Margot Fonteyn gives a performance that must never be forgotten in any assessment of her achievements. Fonteyn is so often praised for qualities she does not possess (such as "ethereality"), that there is a real danger that posterity will overlook many of those she has in super-abundance. She is a full-blooded, magnificent dancer who more often recalls the descriptions of Fanny Elssler than of Marie Taglioni. In *Tiresias* she gives a portrayal considerably more sexy (or, if you prefer it, more passionate) than Jeanmaire in *Carmen*.

New cast in The Shadow

TO make one's debut in a principal role at Covent Garden is presumably unnerving enough, but to make it on a Press Night marking the return of one ballerina and the appearance of another in the revival of an important ballet, would appear to be an ordeal the only adequate answers for which are drink or suicide. Yet such was the ordeal to be faced by Meriel Evans dancing Beriosova's role in *The Shadow* for the first time. Understandably she was nervous, but she got through the part creditably and when she can surmount the considerable technical difficulties without stressing, indeed without even noticing them, it will be a performance of merit.

Another promising dancer, of considerably more experience, Anya Linden was also making her debut in the ballet, taking over the role created by Rosemary Lindsay. Her self-assurance and lively attack gave a fresh edge to the choreography, but, like Evans, at this performance she was able to bring little characterisation to the part. These two roles are intended as contrasted portraits of Sacred and Profane Love; a conception that was not fully revealed by the two young dancers.

Philip Chatfield partnered both girls ably, and a third newcomer to the ballet, Arnott Mader, was suitably sinister as the Shadow. David Blair appears more at home in Brian Shaw's role than when he first assumed it earlier in the season, but the choreography has been so cut and measured to suit Shaw's physique and style that Blair is unable to make much personal impression. **C.B.**

Violetta Elvin in Ballet Imperial. *The work in which she returned to Covent Garden.*
Photo: Houston Rogers

Back in The Beauty

IT was perhaps a pity that Violetta Elvin had to make her return in a full-length classic such as the *Sleeping Beauty* (May 28) in which she does not excel, instead of *Lac des Cygnes*, in which she does.

Her *Rose Adagio* was good—better than I can remember—but her Act I variation a little unsure. This variation needs, above all others, the most immaculate precision and crispness. She appeared rather too sophisticated for a young Princess of sixteen and the headdress does not suit her.

In the Vision scene she never quite achieved the cold enigmatic quality that one always assumes, perhaps wrongly, that a vision should have. Her variation on this occasion was beautifully given.

Her last act *pas de deux* was exciting and she was well-partnered by John Hart. Her whole interpretation was too impregnated by Odette of *Lac des Cygnes* and one begins to feel that her wonderful undulating arms should be reserved for this type of ballet.

Some of her work seemed a little careless and the impression left was that she was marking many of the steps until she got to some more spectacular movement, such as an *arabesque*, which she gives with all the magnificence of the Russian School. It is, however, too soon after her return from an injury, which could have put finish to a dancer's career, to form any definite opinion as to her present finished interpretation of the Aurora role.

Re-shufflled fairies

THERE has been a great re-shuffle among the fairies, not unfortunately to any great advantage to anyone except Anne Heaton. She seemed much more at home as the Fairy of the Enchanted Garden than as the Fairy of the Crystal Fountain. The latter was given by Meriel Evans with certain promise—though hardly enough. Valerie Taylor, thank goodness, has been allowed to keep the role of the Fairy of the Woodland Glades, which she always gives with such distinction.

Rosemary Lindsay has been rather off-form this season and her Lilac Fairy variation was undistinguished. This condition, I am sure, is only temporary and we look forward to seeing her return to the position she held when she created the role of the other girl in *The Shadow* last year.

The only fairy to lift this prologue from becoming an incredible bore was the wicked one—Carabosse. Ashton has now perfected his interpretation; gone is the exaggeration and *chi-chi* which once threatened to spoil it. He made the old harridan into a frustrated and disappointed dowager, who would only be too happy to upset anybody's arrangements for a good party.

Outstanding in the whole evening was Anya Linden's Enchanted Princess in the Bluebird *pas de deux* (no, she is not supposed to be a bluebird, whatever the programme may tell you. The choreography alone should make this clear to everyone). Linden has a good back, good carriage of her head and shoulders and the sort of brittle brilliance which make her ideal for this role. Apart from Alicia Markova, I cannot remember seeing anyone in the past twenty-five years who seemed more suitable for this most exacting *pas de deux*.

As the Bluebird, David Blair shows that he is beginning to *feel* the Covent Garden stage. He will never, in my opinion, be ideal for this role, because, though one of the most promising of the young entry of British male dancers, he is not a strictly classical one. But he gave a most creditable performance. British Bluebirds will always be overshadowed by Brian Shaw, who, when at his best, is in the Idzikovsky class.

The company as a whole seemed very tired. Proof of this was in the ragged lines of the *corps de ballet* and in the sloppy *entrechats* of the fairy cavaliers in the Prologue, which once made such a heartening spectacle. **P.W.**

MABEL RYAN AWARD

THE annual award given by the Cecchetti Society in memory of Mabel Ryan (assistant of Margaret Craske and a famous teacher of children) was fought for at the Rudolf Steiner Hall on May 29. Dame Ninette de Valois was the judge.

The programme is divided into two parts. The first part is purely technical, being the centre-work section of a Cecchetti class with two unseen *enchaînements*. In the second part, each of the forty-two girls danced a solo. Numbered as they were like fillies in a selling-ring, the afternoon became intensely exciting as the "spot-the-winner" stakes came closer and closer.

In the technical part the 42 entrants were divided into four sections, even so it was not so easy to pick out the best. Particularly noticeable, however, were Susan Passfield (Joan Weston pupil), Gloria Bluemel (Diana Barker pupil), Susan Bolton (Moya Kennedy pupil), Susan Salomon (Nesta Brooking pupil), Vivian Dodds (Dulcie Pyne pupil). Each one of these struck me as bringing something more to the steps than technical ability. They showed in their line and feeling that they knew just what the steps meant.

The real test came in the second part—the solos. Here the first three mentioned came up to the expectation raised by their previous work. Outstanding was Judith Archbold (Margaret Cross pupil), who danced a difficult and well-arranged variation excellently and with a feeling for the stage. Susan Salomon, last year's winner, showed a beautiful classical feeling and a professional finish to everything she did; her variation was not nearly so difficult as that arranged for Judith Archbold, though it was obviously choreographed to show her at her best. Others who showed promise were Wendy Mercer and Vivian Dodds (both Dulcie Pyne pupils).

It became apparent that a lot of the girls were handicapped by badly arranged solos. I don't know who arranges these things, possibly the teachers, but a number of them resorted to a super-abundance of *bourrées* on half-point, some had no flow at all, and some were downright unmusical. I would have thought that at this point in a child's dancing career that a lack of musical feeling was the very worst thing that could happen. Also a greater regard for the child's particular qualities, and many of them had outstanding qualities, is surely essential in these solos.

The whole programme was well-arranged and Molly Lake marshalled the entrants with a charm and sympathy that must have put them as much at ease as was possible in such nerve-racking circumstances. It is a fine spectacle to see these young disciplined girls in their white tunics, but it is a pity that there is not more regulation in the neck line of the tunic, the length of the skirt and the way their hair is arranged. These small points can make such a difference to the stage appearance. So much for my own summing up of the occasion during the interval when Dame Ninette was reaching her conclusion.

Here are the results: The Mabel Ryan Medal for 1954 was given to two girls—Judith Archbold and Susan Salomon. This, as Mr. Beaumont (President of the Society) announced, was a unique occurrence, but both the winners had been outstanding for various reasons—Archbold for her dancing of a difficult solo, Salomon for her classical perfection. The runner-up was Susan Passfield, for her fine *adagio* work.

Dame Ninette in her summing-up praised the *port de bras*, which she declared was excellent all round. This is, of course, what one expects in Cecchetti trained students and it was admittedly very good, but I find her statement, that none of the girls lost marks for *port de bras*, to be the only point where our summing-up disagrees. There was one girl whose *port de bras* was so bad that both she and her teacher should be severely spanked; it was glaringly obvious in both the class-work and the solo.

To round-off the afternoon, Dame Ninette strongly criticised the unsuitability of many of the solos which, she declared, made the work of the judge unnecessarily hard. In spite of these criticisms the whole occasion was as rewarding as it was entertaining.

P.W.

Three dancers—Pat Dyer, Norman Dixon and Audrey Nichols—of Ballet Rambert. This company is at the moment giving a season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. During the season, three works new to London are being given. Two by Jack Carter—Love Knots *and* Lola Montez *(first mounted by Ballet Workshop)—and the world premiere of* Variations on a Theme *by John Cranko, to the music of Benjamin Britten's Variations on a Theme by Frank Bridge, and the designs of Kenneth Rowell.*

Photo: Roy Round

DANCE FILMS

Ballerinas all

THE two programmes of dance films, organised by Peter Brinson and the British Film Institute, which were shown at the National Film Theatre from May 23 to June 9, were a triumphant success.

The first programme, *Great Dancers*, opened with Beryl Grey and John Field in the *Black Swan pas de deux*. Originally shown in three dimensions, this two-dimension version does not help it. Some of the camera work is bad; heads and feet are frequently cut off, there are too many close-ups and steps of elevation are shot from above. However, this film was the first experiment in a new medium and it should be looked on as such.

The two Ashton ballets—*Mars and Venus* and *Foyer de Danse*—from the Rambert Collection showed how much invention he had even 25 years ago. *Mars and Venus* seems rather comic now, especially the costume for William Chappell as Mars, but some of the dances, particularly one with a rope, are ingenious and beautiful.

Foyer de Danse is completely successful and the photography, though amateur, gives a wonderful feeling of the ballet studies of Degas. How well the Rambert dancers of that time entered into the spirit of it all! What excellent *entrechats* from Ashton as Le Maitre de Ballet, and what wonderful turns from Markova as L'Etoile! This could almost be the classic as to how ballet for the screen should be photographed.

The film of Olga Spessivtseva in *Giselle*, Act I, is too well known to need further comment from me, except to say it should be seen by everyone who ever has aspirations of taking the role; it is the living proof of her greatness.

Tamara Toumanova in a few fleeting moments gave the thirty-two *fouettés* from *Swan Lake*, Act III, a fragment of the Mazurka from *Les Sylphides* and from *Mozartiana*. She was then fourteen and underlined the fact that it is still possible to be a ballerina at that age.

Galina Ulanova was seen in the *adagio* from *Swan Lake*, Act II, in excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet*, partnered by Kozlovsky, and in the Waltz from *Les Sylphides*, partnered by Preobrajensky. All have been reviewed previously. I find her dancing in *Les Sylphides* to be a revelation.

With this great galaxy of stars, one wondered how Pavlova would show up. No need to worry, for her greatness is all there. The fire that burnt within, the dedication of her whole body, all were made obvious. To see her greeting her suitors in *Christmas*, to see her hands alone in *Dying Swan*, to see her arabesque in *The Fading Rose*, would surely be enough to prove that she still reigns supreme. Those who profess to know about the dance or its schools and cannot recognise this supremacy, even in these fragments, must be blind.

Dances from all over

BALLET from Five Countries was the rather deceptive title of the second programme—two of the films were of folk-dances from Poland and Hungary. Starting with India, we were given the excellently lit and danced *Lord Siva Danced* with Ram Gopal and his company, as well as a fragment from Jean Renoir's *The River*, with Radha giving a dance of the Bharata Natyam School of Southern India.

Central Europe was represented by *Masowsze*, a spirited Polish film, which could have been better photographed; and *Wedding at Ecser*, which ingeniously shows a number of wedding dances from Hungary. The latter is well-made and directed and the chorus and musical accompaniment is charming.

America did not come off too well with the ballet sequence from Gene Kelly's *An American in Paris*, which seemed rather brash. Kelly has done much better than this. England's contribution—the ballet from *The Red Shoes*—comes off rather better. Though abounding in *clichés*, it is remarkable for some fine dancing from Moira Shearer and Massine. The camera-work is good and realises how to overcome the limitations of film ballet. The Pavlova film was retained throughout the season. Let us hope that the National Film Theatre gives us more of these excellent programmes in the near future.

P.W.

BALLET COMIQUE

IT takes courage to form a ballet company without relying largely on the familiar classics. The repertory of George Kirsta's Ballet Comique, apart from a version of *Swan Lake*, Act II, and a few classical *pas de deux*, consisted of five new ballets by five different choreographers. During the week of May 31 the company appeared at the New Theatre, Oxford, their nearest visit to London, and it was possible to see two programmes, including all the new works, except *Junior Clerk*, which has choreography by Derek Mendel and music by Lennox Berkeley.

Not all the works were of the same standard. *Les Etoiles*, a divertissement for six soloists, and a *corps de ballet* arranged by Michel de Lutry to music by Massenet (*Le Cid*), proved rather formless; and some spectacular lifts performed by de Lutry with Domini Callaghan, seemed to lose much of their effect through failing to match the music.

Fountain, with choreography by Peter Darrell to music by Fauré, set out to show variations on the theme of Love. The realistic love of ordinary couples was depicted as unnecessarily sordid; the sculptured figures who came to life to represent symbolic love, seemed to have little to do with love at all. The dances for these fountain figures which formed the main part of the ballet, showed much invention, particularly in a *pas de trois* well danced by Stanley Williams, Norman McDowell and Derek Westlake. Domini Callaghan was given a solo which showed her to good advantage.

Parody of Petit

JACK CARTER'S *Shadows of the Past* appeared to be a light-hearted parody of all those ballets by Roland Petit which revolve round a sexy heroine of marked criminal tendencies. It is an amusing work with much really comic invention. Herida May as Mrs. X, the mysterious blackmailer, and Peter Darrell as the young man whose engagement is nearly broken because of her activities, gave outstanding performances among a cast, all of whom danced with spirit.

Eugene Onegin Suite is loosely based on the poem by Pushkin and Tchaikovsky's opera. Too loosely based, in fact, since Onegin's rejection of Tatiana is not clearly shown and the final scene consequently loses some of its point. The music, however, selected from the opera and arranged by Leonard Hancock, was ideally suited to dancing and Victor Gsovsky created fluent and attractive choreography. Irène Shorik danced much better as Tatiana than she had done earlier in the evening as Odette. Denys Palmer made an effective Onegin, although the character is not so fully developed as it might have been, and Bjorn Holmgren danced elegantly in the intricate solo given to Monsieur Triquet. A romantic *pas de deux* for Olga and Lensky was stylishly danced by Xenia Palley and Stanley Williams.

The decors for most of the works in the repertory were designed by the company's artistic director, George Kirsta. His very personal idiom is not equally suited to all the works, but the settings for *Fountain* and *Shadows of the Past* were effective. Leonard Hancock, the musical director and conductor, secured good playing from the small orchestra, but the orchestration for *Swan Lake* was not altogether satisfactory.

Although the company had been in existence little more than a month when I saw them, the *corps de ballet* were dancing well. The four boys who take the *corps de ballet* roles, as well as small solos, had all improved remarkably since their last appearances with other companies. They were, in addition to Westlake and McDowell already mentioned, Donald McAlpine and Malcolm Hughes. There is some promising talent also among the girls, of whom Denise Shaune, Josephine Gordon and Mary Duchesne attracted attention. Much of the credit for the standard achieved is doubtless dut to the company's ballet master, Stanley Williams, who is on leave of absence from the Royal Danish Ballet.

John Percival

DANCING IN MUSICALS

Indigestive Cockles, no Champagne

IN the great mass of talent and material thrown together by Cecil Landeau in *Cockles and Champagne* at the Saville Theatre, nothing and nobody emerged with any great distinction, except for Miriam Karlin (surely the successor to Fanny Brice) and Diana Monks (wife of Festival Ballet's Keith Beckett).

The dancing was no better and no worse than we have become accustomed to in the average British revue. Nina Tarakanova's choreography for a ballet, *Monday's Wash*, had an original idea and was distinguished by a sense of fitness. Paddy Stone's *Pavanne* to Morton Gould music was the best dance number in a previous Landeau cabaret revue; on the present occasion the lighting was so bad that it was impossible to see it.

Welcoming and welcome hosts

A VERY different pair of shoes, or three pairs of shoes, was the dancing of Beryl Kaye, Paddy Stone and Irving Davies in *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure* at the Fortune Theatre. The three of them share the programme with Joyce Grenfell and it all amounts to the liveliest revue to be seen in London at the moment.

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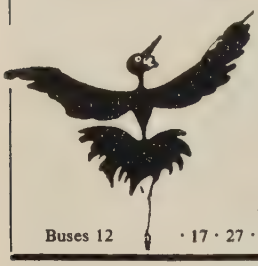

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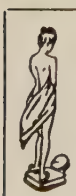

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they have numbers arranged by Wendy Toye and Alfred Rodrigues. Their verve and punch make the perfect complement to Grenfell's brilliantly witty and nostalgic sketches.

The three of them are at their best when they are dancing together, particularly in *Blue Mood* and *Slap Happy*. Stone and Davies show a great sense of comedy as two loafers in *Mañana*, while Stone's *Paddy's Nightmare*, is an excellent production number. The dancing all through with its mixture of modern and classical technique, amount to some of the best we have ever seen in a British revue.

P.W.

TELEVISION

Beryozka (The Birch Tree)

Moscow State Dance Company. Given on May 9. Choreography by Nadezhda Nadezhdina. Costumes designed by Lyuba Silich and Vladimir Rindin. Presented for Television by Patricia Foy.

the programme included:

Beryozka - - - *The Merry-Go-Round*
The Rustic Polka - - *The Northern Dance*

THE success or failure of Folk Dancing when presented on the stage, depends on its ability to recreate that essential atmosphere of colour, high spirits, verve and youth, which is to be found on festive occasions in the local village square. In the theatre, to help to obtain this atmosphere, they have to rely to a greater extent on colourful costumes, on the skilful use of lighting and on a general slickness of production.

It was a noble and daring gesture to invite these Russian dancers to appear on television. Unfortunately, it did not altogether succeed, as inevitably it lost that essential element of colour. For the most part the lighting was not nearly strong enough and one could not clearly see the costumes. We were left with youth and high spirits—which was not enough.

Nadezhda Nadezhdina introduced the programme with a few suitable words, which was then followed by *Beryozka*. This dance is given by almost the whole company; it is a gliding, twirling, yet almost motionless dance that resolves itself into many beautiful patterns.

When seen on the large stage of the Stoll Theatre, this number was singularly effective; on the confined space of a television screen, it could not hope to achieve its full beauty. Through force of necessity, the cameras had to be at such a distance from the dancers that one could scarcely see the patterns. The close-ups, of which there were far too many, only showed a confused mass of figures.

Ironically enough during the second dance, *Rustic Polka*, in which only five participate, there was a golden opportunity for some good close-up shots, but the cameras preferred to remain in the distance. *Merry-Go-Round* was perhaps the most successful from the production angle; the cameras behaved much better, resulting in aiding, rather than hindering, the dancers.

Their final number, *Northern Dance*, is one of the most lovely of all their dances, with its swift, snake-like, encircling movements. The costumes were exquisite, and made one sigh for coloured vision, in order to capture their full beauty.

It was interesting to see this Moscow company on television; but the screen must have learnt by now that it is not suited to large dance companies.

Nicholas Baker

The Moscow State Dancers in The Merry-go-round, *one of their most successful numbers on the recent television performance given just before they returned to Russia after their triumphant season at the Stoll Theatre. Photo: Paul Wilson*

Trojan Out West

Given on May 16. Devised and choreographed by Margaret Dale. Music by Arthur Wilkinson. Costumes designed by Ray Powell. Settings by Richard Henry. Produced by Naomi Capon.

Cast:

Trojan - - - GARY BURNE & MICHAEL BOULTON
The Bandit - - JOHN HART
Trojan's Trainer - JULIA FARRON
Three Cowboys - ALEXANDER GRANT, RAY POWELL, PETER CLEGG

TROJAN had apparently profited a great deal by his recent American tour, for in his latest experiences 'out west,' he not only achieved the almost herculean task of overpowering a most fearsome looking bandit, but also provided the best ballet that we have seen on Children's Television for many, many months.

The story is not particularly involved. Three rather more dashing than brave cowboys are seen. Along comes Trojan the horse, who is being put through his paces by his trainer. They all stare at a notice pinned on the door of the bank, portraying a certain bandit. Who should then come along but the bandit himself; he sets out to rob the bank. The cowboys take to their heels and cower in the background. They persuade Trojan to deal with the rather awkward situation, which he does most effectively. The sheriff's star is awarded to Trojan and all ends happily.

Margaret Dale's simple story contained rather more miming than actual dancing. But how much more satisfying to see a simple work well done, than one of those more ambitious productions, which give the impression of having been just thrown together!

This production was well served by its cast. John Hart, complete with black moustache, was especially ferocious as the big bad bandit. The co-operation of Gary Burne and Michael Boulton resulted in a most appealing Trojan; special praise must be given to the one responsible for the manipulation of those large beautiful and baleful eyes.

The costumes were all well-designed by Ray Powell, which ideally blended with the settings of Richard Henry, as did the music of Arthur Wilkinson. From the production angle, the ballet could have been in no finer hands than those of Naomi Capon.

Viewers will be pleased to hear that Trojan will be making further appearances from time to time.

Nicholas Baker

Dance and Dancers . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

PARIS OPÉRA

BOTH dancers and balletomanes viewed the cancellation by the Laniel Government of the performances to be given at the Opéra by the Soviet Ballet, with bitter regret. The quasi-historic comparison between the two companies promised to be particularly original and instructive from more than one point of view. Indeed, the two national ballet companies had never exchanged official visits, the initiative of Diaghilev being a personal one. But only a few very private rehearsals gave to some the opportunity of appreciating a style whose faithful classicism everyone wished to see. Let us hope that this deplorable incident will not create a precedent!

While the Soviet dancers were in Paris, the Paris Opéra ballet company visited Geneva and Wiesbaden. Liane Daydé made a good impression with a very delicate interpretation of the Sleeping Beauty in *Divertissement*, and the same ballet marked the return, after an absence of several months through illness, of Claude Bessy, who danced in the Florestan *pas de trois* with Josette Clavier and Jean-Paul Andréani.

The idea of founding the *Amis de la Bibliothèque-Musée de la Danse*, an association which brings together dancers, critics and lovers of the dance, both French and foreign, is particularly to be welcomed. One of the aims of this association is to make the Library, which has recently been enriched by the addition of Rolf de Maré's Archives Internationales de la Danse, an international centre of documentation. Exhibitions have already been given in honour of the Opéra, Cecchetti, and Diaghilev, and on May 7 a tribute was paid to the great critic André Levinson, whose memory was evoked by his friends, Pierre Gaxotte of the Académie Française, R. Vuillermoz, and J. Fayard. The absence from their number of the most important of them, Maurice Brillant, Levinson's disciple, who died last year, was felt by all.

MARTHA GRAHAM

IN a very interesting demonstration of her work Martha Graham, who gave six performances with her company at the Theatre des Champs-Elysées, proved that her method owes its foundation to classical, oriental, and even Dalcrozian techniques. The favour which this dancer in the close atmosphere of the American dance world is well known, as also is the influence which she has wielded over such temperaments as that of Jerome Robbins.

Despite certain very interesting moments (the fusion of the ensembles, and certain attitudes) and the presence of dancers who are no less so, the taste for abstraction, the hermeticism which encloses these "conceptions"—the term ballet not being applicable to them—their extreme length and slowness, imprint the programme with certain monotony.

One must, however, pay tribute to the profound intellectuality of Martha Graham and the suppleness and tractability of her dancers, and meantime await the masterpiece which will convert even the most reticent to this new style, or perhaps await an initiation for which willingness alone is not sufficient.

FESTIVALS

IN the world of music and the theatre, festivals assume an ever-growing importance every summer in France, as they do now throughout all Europe. A well known situation, a spa, or more simply the desire of a provincial town to play a brilliant, if ephemeral, role in contemporary artistic life, encourages those who organise them to commission spectacles and concerts, and search for new works never performed before. The dance cannot be left out of these manifestations, and brings to them its lightness, grace and harmony.

Massine Ballet for Nantes

AT Nantes, on the banks of the Loire, from May 5 to 18, was held the *Fêtes du Mai musical*, of which one of the most important features was undoubtedly the first performance in France of Massine's *Laudes Evangelii*. Remembering that the modern theatre had its beginnings during the Middle Ages in the churches, Bishop Villepet opened the doors of Notre Dame du Bon Port to the dances. In the great pillarless nave, beneath the rose-window of the right aisle, were arranged the platform, the back-cloth and the very restrained decoration, while spotlights were concealed in the organ loft and the pulpit.

A series of plastic images rather than a ballet, this spectacle of mime, dance and song depicts, in the course of two hours, the earthly life of Christ, from His humble birth to the apotheosis of His resurrection. With the greatest discretion, a sense of time and a poetic beauty, Massine has succeeded in recapturing the simplicity of the Florentine Quattrocento in accents which have already been heard in *Nobilissima Visione*. The moving human fresco every now and then resolves into an unforgettable tableau, such as the Agony in the Garden of Olives. The players—Geneviève Lespagnol (*The Blessed Virgin*) and A. Pietri (*Jesus*)—are clad in tunics of dull blue, purple and bright yellow. Valentine Bucchi's music accompanied the piece, the orchestra being conducted by Jean Urteauga.

Marseilles and Arles

THE Paris Opéra ballet gave three gala performances at Bordeaux on May 27, 28 and 29.

FROM June 26 to July 15, Marseilles is giving an international festival of ballet in honour of the celebrated choreographer, Marius Petipa, who was born in that city. It is not yet definitely known who will take part in it.

THIS year Arles celebrates its bimillenium. In its ancient theatre, which seats 4,000 people, two choreographic galas will be given in which the dancers of the Paris Opéra, under Serge Lifar, will take part. In this old setting the ballet *Phèdre* will take on a heightened relief. The orchestra of the Concerts Colonne will accompany the dancers, and Richard Blareau will conduct.

EXHIBITION

IN the calm seclusion of the Place Dauphine, Gilberte Cournand has made her little bookshop, "La Danse," which has now been open for two years, the rendezvous of dancers and their admirers. Drawings and sculptures rub shoulders with old and rare editions, the latest books, albums of photographs and magazines, all sharing the common theme of the dance. Here Gilberte Cournand gives information and advice, encourages the young dancer and congratulates the star, and several times a year organises the signing of new works and holds exhibitions.

Last year she rediscovered Louis Legrand, a contemporary of Degas, who had been too long neglected. This year she presents the ballerinas of the nineteenth century, a collection of Romantic lithographs, of which some are exquisite. Mlles. Bigottini, Cerrito, Elssler, Grisi and Taglioni are, of course, to be found, but there also are Noblet and Guy-Stéphan. Such efforts, which aim at giving permanence to the most fragile of arts, are to be praised without reservation.

NEWS IN BRIEF

FRANCOISE ADRET, now ballet-mistress of Roland Petit's company, has, in company with several other dancers of the Ballets de Paris, including Colette Marchand, arrived in Paris for a stay of several months before leaving for a long tour on the shores of the Pacific. Two of her recent works which have inspired considerable interest in Paris have been *Quatre mouvements*, arranged to a symphony by Haydn for the Royal Opera House, Amsterdam, and an extract from *Terrain vague*, which makes one want to see the complete work.

DURING a gala given at the Château de Compiegne on May 22, Milorad Miskovitch partnered Yvette Chauviré in Gsovsky's *Grand Pas Classique* (music by Auber).

THE Etorki company of Basque dancers and singers at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées from May 26 to June 8, presented a programme consisting of *Le Livre d'Etchouru, Andonine* and *Orhy Pian*, which we shall review in more detail next month.

ON May 25 the Théâtre Marigny opened its doors to the Japanese Ballets of Miho Hanayagu. This is the first time for twenty-five years that a Japanese ballet company has been seen in France, where until now only individual artists have appeared.

ON June 11 three new ballets by Yves Brieuxet and Maurice Béjart will be presented at the Theatre de l'Etoile, those taking part in them including Solange Schwarz, Michel Rayne, Maurice Béjart, Joan Cadzow, and Lucienne Berggren. The principal dancer from the Stockholm Opera House, Ellen Rash, has just joined them.

Marie-Françoise Christout

AMERICA

Kaye returns to Ballet Theatre

NORA KAYE is to return to Ballet Theatre next season, after an absence of almost four years, and co-directors Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith have also engaged Antony Tudor to restore several of his ballets to the repertory, and this may well be cause for rejoicing all around. Certainly these factors will loom importantly in Ballet Theatre's forthcoming anniversary season.

Graham's return

MARTHA GRAHAM, who concluded her European tour with an engagement with her company at the Vienna Festival from June 6—10, returned to New York in time to conduct the twentieth annual June course at her school, from June 14 to July 10. After conducting a series of master classes at the seventh season of the Connecticut College School of Dance, Miss Graham leaves for a vacation on the West Coast.

Markova's Appearances

ALICIA MARKOVA, due to return to America early this month, is scheduled for a return engagement at the Robin Hood Dell, Philadelphia, later this month, and will also be appearing at Jacob's Pillow with her partner, Milorad Miskovitch.

Jacob's Pillow Festival

FOUNDER-DIRECTOR of The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Ted Shawn, has assembled a distinguished faculty as well as an impressive array of artists to appear at his summer dance centre this summer.

Pearl Lang, soloist in Martha Graham's Company, heads the modern dance department, while Margaret Craske returns to supervise classes in classic ballet. Others in residence include: Angel Cansino, Spanish Dance; Ram Gopal, Hindu Dance; Ann Hutchinson, Dance Notation; and Yurek Lazowski, Character Ballet.

This season's performance schedule is also noteworthy. The Celtic Ballet of Scotland, directed by Margaret Morris, will be in residence. Miss Morris will teach, as will Bruce McClure and Andrew Rolla; the company will also appear on three important week-end performances.

Both Alexandra Danilova and André Eglevsky will dance at Jacob's Pillow this season and other artists include Inesita, the Spanish dancer; the John Butler Dance Theatre; Lester Horton Dance Theatre; Charles Weidman and Company; Ram Gopal; Harriet Ann Gray and Company and Yurek Lakowski.

N.Y. City Ballet's Tour

THE New York City Ballet, which opened its summer engagements with a twelve-day visit to Chicago, appeared for a week in Seattle, two weeks in San Francisco and is currently in Los Angeles for a six-week season. For the last two weeks of this engagement the full-length production of *The Nutcracker* constitutes the programme. The company is due back in New York next month for rehearsals prior to the opening of the autumn season on August 31.

New Role for Ruth St. Denis

RUTH ST. DENIS, America's First Lady of Dance, who began her career as an actress, returns to acting this summer, when she plays the title role in *The Mad-woman of Chaillot* in summer theatre. During August Miss St. Denis will dance at the Hollywood Bowl, in Los Angeles, in a programme commemorating Loie Fuller.

Two Spanish companies due

IMPRESARIO S. HUROK announces that Antonio and his Spanish Ballet will be presented at the Broadway Theatre in January for a New York engagement prior to a national tour.

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will make its first American tour next autumn. The company is scheduled for a two-week New York engagement in mid-October prior to its eighteen-week cross-country tour.

Dancers in the news . . .

PEARL PRIMUS appeared in a series of two lecture-demonstrations at the Modern Museum of Art during mid-June . . . .

Daniel Nagrin is currently on a concert tour of twenty-five performances, in as many cities, that will conclude on July 23 . . . .

Leslie Caron is mentioned for the key role in *The Amazing Adele*, a musical version of the Parisian comedy that has been adapted by Anita Loos . . . .

Claude Marchant and his company, recently returned to America after dancing in Europe and South America, appeared on one of the special bills at the Palace Theatre, New York, for a week's engagement . . . .

Seats have gone on sale at the Metropolitan Opera House for Moira Shearer and Robert Helpmann in the Old Vic production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, due to open on September 21 under the aegis of S. Hurok . . . .

Wide range in film show

THE New York Dance Film Society's second annual programme of films took place at the Modern Museum of Art during June. Highlights of the three-programme festival included Pavlova in *The Dying Swan* and in scenes from *The Dumb Girl of Portici*; Charles Chaplin in *Tango Tangles;* Hanya Holm's *The Golden Fleece; Evolution of the Dance*, filmed at Denishawn in 1918; *Shadow on the Prairie*, by Royal Winnipeg Ballet; Doris Humphrey's *The Shakers*, *The Dancing Fleece*, choreographed by Harold Turner . . . . Spanish dance has also had its share of attention with *Flamenco*, a full-length film in Madrid, that includes sequences of Antonio, Pilar Lopez and the Ballet Espagnol . . . .

Arthur Todd

SOUTH AFRICA

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

All at sea

THE following notes represent news from the company rather than a summary of press comments.

When the company left on April 8, everyone was looking forward to the rest which a fortnight's sea voyage would give them. The voyage exceeded expectations. The food was plentiful and everyone developed a large appetite. For the first day or two the company either ate or slept.

After the Canary Islands, the crew rigged up a *barre*, on the sun-deck and a class was given every morning at 9 o'clock and 5.30 when the sun was not too hot. Even then, a few people got burned, but the sea was so calm that it was even possible to perform *pirouettes* and jumps without difficulty.

The routine for the day was: 8.30, practice; 9.00, girls' class, followed by rehearsal; 11.10, swimming or sunbathing, 1.00 lunch; 4.00, tea; 5.30, boys' class; 6.00, swimming; 7.30, dinner; 8.30, film or dance.

As usual, the company carried off all the prizes at the Fancy Dress Ball. The wardrobe mistress won the ladies' first prize with the Red Queen from *Alice in Wonderland*, and Pirmin Trecu won a prize for his Charlie Chaplin impersonation. At the ship's concert David Chivers and Sheila O'Reilly acted a musical sketch; Pirmin Trecu, dressed as an old woman, recited a monologue (written by Kenneth Alwyn) entitled "My First Time." This was followed by dances from *Facade*, in which Peggy van Praagh danced the Tango, and later Trecu and O'Reilly danced their *Jota*. The costumes were improvised, mostly from paper.

All ashore

THE company arrived at Capetown on April 22. Unfortunately it was the one bad day at sea and Table Mountain was completely hidden by cloud, so that the first view of Capetown was the quay with a very large banner saying "Capetown Welcomes Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet." At about 10.30 they landed and for the rest of the day found themselves followed by a battery of photographers wherever they went. They were immediately driven in cars, covered with banners, to a reception for an official welcome by the Administrator (Prime Minister) of Cape Province.

The Administrator's speech and that of Peggy van Praagh in reply were both broadcast. Then a group went off to Broadcasting House, where the South African dancers and Peggy van Praagh were interviewed over the air. At mid-day there was a cocktail party at City Hall and a Civic Welcome from the Mayor, after which the company was entertained to lunch by African Theatres.

At 4.30 the company left by plane for Johannesburg, arriving at 8.45, when the whole performance started again. Floodlights were brought up to the plane so that the photographers could take pictures of the company coming down the gangway, more newsreel men, and an official welcome by the Administrator of the Transvaal in a special lounge of the airport. Peggy van Praagh again replied and again both the speeches were broadcast.

The company then left for their hotels, but the South African members and Peggy van Praagh first did some recorded interviews for the radio before they were eventually released.

The Cecchetti Society had met the plane with flowers, and there were flowers in all the rooms. The company settled into the city of Johannesburg very quickly. As one member of the company wrote—"it out-Americas America." The weather was like a warm English July, and even warm enough at night to go out in summer dresses and no coats.

All right

ON Friday, the day after their arrival, their time was taken up with another official reception and with settling in at the theatre; rehearsals started on Saturday and went on all day Sunday. Everyone immediately found the altitude trying; it made them sleepy and it was very hard to dance.

The first night was an enormous success and a major social occasion. This success has continued and hardly a day has gone by in Johannesburg without some kind of mention of the company in the newspapers, even if it was only a picture recording the engagement of Patricia Miller and Dudley Davis, or Peggy van Praagh addressing a Women's Lunch. The company have received excellent notices and are obviously dancing very well in response to all the encouragement.

The altitude continues to make a lot of difference and occasionally some dancers have had to use oxygen in the wings. Incidentally, Veronica Vail has also become engaged in South Africa and will be staying out there to get married.

The latest reports indicate a big success for Alfred Rodrigue's new ballet, and full houses continually.

Nora Kaye is returning to Ballet Theatre, the company which first brought her international fame and whose repertoire is the most suitable to her outstanding dramatic ability, particularly so in the Tudor ballets and in Agnes de Mille's Fall River Iefend. *Since she left this company a few years ago she has danced with New York City Ballet, where the repertoire hardly showed her at her best except in Robbins* The Cage.

Recently she made a tour of the Far East with Paul Szilard is her partner. The two of them enjoyed an enormous success everywhere. Here they are seen in Szilard's ballet, Night Fright, *during their season at Tokyo. This work was mounted by Szilard specially for the tour.*

Also returning to Ballet Theatre is Antony Tudor, who will restore several of his ballets to the repertoire. This is especially fortunate, for in his ballets Nora Kaye has always been at her best.

PORTUGAL

FESTIVAL BALLET

Initial mistake rectified

I AM not going to repeat here that Festival Ballet is a good company, you all know more about it than I who have seen the company only occasionally abroad and, now, for sixteen performances at the Saint Carlos Opera House.

The Editor of DANCE AND DANCERS has already discussed the necessity of planning an interesting first night for ballet companies opening in a foreign country. The first night of Festival Ballet in Lisbon was not an unqualified success, because, in spite of exceptionally efficient performances by all artists, the programme did not present anything new, modern or particularly exciting.

It is a further proof of the excellence of this company that, after Anton Dolin and Natalie Krassovska danced *Giselle* in the second performance, the public and the critics started to take interest in the company.

The rest of the season proceeded with a crescendo that culminated in a last evening performance and a last matinee, when the public did not want to leave the theatre. They applauded and shouted for about half an hour; the curtain stayed up and the artists did not even leave the stage strewn with flowers thrown from proscenium boxes. Dolin had to make a speech, then repeat it, and finally come in front and say "thank you" before the curtain, at last, would come down and the public would leave the theatre.

Other companies that came to Lisbon got better reviews and were more applauded on the first night; none got the enthusiastic farewell and endeared themselves so much to the Lisbon public as did Festival Ballet. It seemed that the public wanted to make up for its reserve on the first night.

Triumph in the home of Port

ON the basis of the Lisbon experience the programme for the first night at the Teatro Rivoli, Oporto, was suitably changed with Dolin and Krassovska dancing *Giselle* and the four performances given there were triumphal.

The highlights of the season were: *Prince Igor* dances, with the hundred singers of the chorus from the Opera House, directed by Maestros Mario Pellegrini and Carlo Pasquali. The impact on the public was tremendous. Russell Kerr danced the Chief Warrior at a moment's notice, and very well. Later Istvan Rabovsky danced with all the fire and the energy we appreciate in him. *Petrouchka*, with Dolin and Anita Landa and Louis Godfrey; *Scheherazade*, with Kovach and Rabovsky, got the audience to fever point. Perhaps he is a better dancer than she, but she has the beauty that particularly appeals to Latin people.

We saw the second act of *Esmeralda*. The costumes are gorgeous and form a polichromatic pattern that appeals to the eye. Best liked was the dance of the buffoons (Landa, Rossana, Kovel, Emblem). Krassovska and Gilpin gave a refined interpretation of Esmeralda and her poet; Kovach and Rabovsky danced the same roles and were more gypsy like. Belinda Wright and Oleg Briansky make a very romantic pair. All the dances of the *corps de ballet* were executed with a disciplined zest that won applause. Nicholas Beriosoff got the maximum from everybody concerned and reconstructed and has arranged some lively choreography. Beriosoff was very much appreciated, with Peter White, in the various parts they mimed.

Krassovska, and later Rossana, danced a marvellous *Sylphides* with Polajenko, a suitable partner.

All the ballets not already seen here, like *Symphonic Impressions* (good the Adagio of Dale and Briansky); *Symphony for Fun* (Anita Landa, John Gilpin and Keith Beckett outstanding); *Grieg Concerto* (Marilyn Burr, Jeanette Minty, Petrus Bosman got applauded); *Concerto Grosso* (the whole *corps de ballet* did very well), were very much appreciated by the public and got a good press.

Apart from the enthusiastic references to the principal artists in the Lisbon and Oporto press, we must point out that the whole *corps de ballet*, the artistic direction of Anton Dolin, the general production of Nicholas Beriosoff and the efforts made by Duarte Figueiredo, director general of Teatro S. Carlos, to bring the best ballet companies to Portugal, received great praise from the public and critics.

Cyril Homs

Ballet Dates

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at Covent Garden

June
24 *Checkmate, Symphonic Variations, Coppelia* Act III
26 (M) *Veneziana, Coppelia* Act III, *Sleeping Beauty* Act III
26 (E) *Veneziana, Coppelia* Act III, *Sleeping Beauty* Act III
End of Season

BALLET RAMBERT
at Sadler's Wells Theatre

June
24-26 *Love Knots, Variations on a theme, Giselle*
28 Theatre Royal, Windsor (2 weeks)
July
26 Tor and Torrington Festival, Barnstaple
August
16 Birmingham Repertory, Birmingham (3 weeks)
September
6 Civic Theatre, Chesterfield
13 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury

FESTIVAL BALLET
July at Royal Festival Hall

15-24 *La Esmeralda*
26-31 *The Nutcracker, Pas de Quatre, Symphony for Fun*
August
2-7 *Swan Lake, Alice in Wonderland, Beau Danube*
9-14 *La Esmeralda*
16-18 *Sylphides, Scheherazade, Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
19-21 *Sylphides, Petrouchka, Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
Aug.
23-28 *Concerto* (Grieg), *Vision of Marguerite, Don Quixote, Vilia*
30 to
Sept. 1 *Giselle, Napoli*
2-4 *The Nutcracker, Napoli*
6-11 *La Esmeralda*

THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
at the Empire Theatre

The Sadler's Wells Ballet in homage to Diaghilev
Aug.
23-28 *Chapeau Tricorn, L'Oiseau de Feu* (new production), *La Boutique Fantasque*
Shakespeare production with ballet
Aug. 31- *Midsummer Night's Dream* with
Sept. 11 Moira Shearer, Robert Helpmann and full ballet

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June
29 Gwyn Hall, Neath
July
1 Town Hall, Maesteg
3 Marquee, Pontypridd
6 Sophia Gardens Pavilion, Swansea
8 Brangwyn Hall, Swansea
9 Pavilion, Porthcawl

TELEVISION

June
28 Domini Callaghan and Michel de Lutry in *This is Show Business*
July
12 Festival Ballet in *Alice in Wonderland*

BALLETS DE FRANCE
June de Janine Charrat

21 Olympia Theatre, Dublin (2 weeks)
July
6 Llangollen Eisteddfod (1 perf.)

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June
28-30 Waterlow Park, Highgate
July
1-3 Streatham Common

BALLET FILMS
at the Rialto Cinema

From *Trio-Ballet* with Galina Ulanova
June 23 (*Swan Lake, Flame of Paris, Fountains of Bakhchisarai*)

Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested)

TOM VINCENT, 174 Collins Street, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, wants b.c., m., age 18-25, in U.S.A., England, France, m.a. 19, ls. French, o.i. theatre, music, travel, p.r., all answered.

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Tamara Karsavina

will be on the purple cover of our August number. She also contributes an article on the reason for Diaghilev.

This special issue, commemorating the Twenty-five Years Since the Death of Diaghilev, will also contain articles and memories of the great man from many of the famous people who were connected with him, including Anton Dolin.

There will be numerous photographs, drawings and designs, many of which have never been reproduced before.

A chronological list of the ballets he presented will emphasise the contribution that each gave to the world of art.

In addition to this Diaghilev supplement there will be an illustrated article on the ballet in Russia today by Evan Senior, who is at present there. Also news and pictures of ballet everywhere.

BE SURE OF THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE AND PLACE A FIRM ORDER.

Norah Kovach being mobbed by admirers in her dressing room after Festival Ballet's final performance at the S. Carlos Opera House in Lisbon. She is seen with our correspondent in Portugal. Photo: Luiz Mendes

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Man of Barcelona, is of Natalie Krassovska and John Gilpin in Nicholas Beriosoff's new production of *La Esmeralda*, which Festival Ballet are giving at the Royal Festival Hall on July 15.

KRASSOVSKA is a third generation ballerina. Her grandmother was a soloist at the Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, her mother the beautiful Lydia Krassovska of the Diaghilev Ballet. Her father came from an ancient Scottish family. Born in St. Petersburg, Natalie first studied there and then went to Madame Preobrajenska in Paris. First appearing on the stage in the *corps de ballet* of Nijinska's company in 1932, she later joined Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and soon started to take over important roles, later reaching ballerina status. She appeared in the films *The Gay Parisian* and *Spanish Fiesta*. She joined Festival Ballet as joint ballerina with Markova from its outset in 1950. Since then has remained as ballerina and will take the title role in *La Esmeralda*.

GILPIN was born in Southsea, where his first teacher was Tina Pearce. He won a number of medals for dancing and in 1939 went to the Cone-Ripman School. He played straight roles on the films and stage and in 1945 joined Ballet Rambert. He immediately took over leading roles, as well as having several created for him. When the company returned from their Australian tour Gilpin joined Ballets de Paris and later the de Cuevas company. Joining Festival Ballet at its outset, he has risen to become one of the leading male dancers of our time. He will create the role of the Poet in the new production of *La Esmeralda*.

This month's back cover, by Giacomelli, is of the greatest Soviet ballerina, Galina Ulanova. She should have appeared with her company at the Paris Opera but, owing to the political situation in France, the Laniel government cancelled the season. She is now appearing in a new film, *Trio-Ballet*, at the Rialto Cinema.

AUSTRALIA

—BOROVANSKY BALLET—

THE company has played in Melbourne for over five months—playing to capacity in one of Australia's largest theatres. Now they have moved on to Adelaide.

The first night in Melbourne—comprising of *Swan Lake*, Act II, *Symphonie Fantastique* and *Le Beau Danube*—was one of the most enthusiastic in the company's history. *Swan Lake* was not as good as previously, the dancers all wore short tutus and the *corps* seemed ragged. Peggy Sager, as Odette, and Vassili Trunoff, as Prince Siegfried, were excellent individually; unfortunately their *pas de deux* were far from smooth as Trunoff was a rather brutal classical partner.

His variation was particularly good: beautifully finished turns, strong *batterie* and a fine masculine presence. He is apt to show 'character' tendencies in his arm movements where classical arms are essential. Peggy Sager gave as personal an interpretation of Odette as any dancer could give. She has virtuosity, balance and line and managed to make good contact with the audience.

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE re-created by Vassilkovsky, was a *tour de force* of production. William Constable's decor was the best he has designed for some time, strongly influenced, of course, by the Bérard original. The pastoral scene seemed strangely unfinished and the famous *pas de deux* commonplace. However, as a spectacle, the overall effect was most satisfying.

The ballet was really three-quarters Massine and the rest Vassilkovsky (Massine was not acknowledged in the programme).

The massive building-up and breaking down of group movements and patterns has been adhered to, but the subtleties of the few intimate *enchainements* seem to have been lost. Paul Grinwis, looking very like Massine, was a romantically poised poet with the necessary strength to hold the five scenes together. Anna Mariya Vamzer, as the Beloved, *bourréed* through the early scenes without giving more than a hint as to whether she could dance at all. As the Witch she revealed fine dramatic force, but with such an expressive face she need not have smiled so much. Paul Hammond and Christine Hubert achieved good portraits in smaller roles.

LE BEAU DANUBE was a little over-romped even for this ballet. Vassilkovsky has altered the role of the Dandy from the arrangement previously used and at times appeared to be on the verge of a soft-shoe dance. Raoul Celada as the Hussar was out of condition and made heavy-going of the role. His interpretation was pure cardboard, his appearance over-brilliantined and his smile electrically forced.

The company appeared to be far luckier with its female importations than with the males. Christiane Hubert was chic and soubrettish as the First Hand; Claudie Algeranova the gayest Street Dancer seen here for year, with an interpretation close to vaudeville; while Eve King captured the fragile atmosphere of romance as the Fiancée.

Abandoned Sylphides

FOKINE'S *Les Sylphides*, revived later, was not at all as it should be. It was given with much spirit and wild abandon by the female principals and with boredom by Celada. His feet were unpointed and his jumps devoid of *batterie*, the impression created was most barren. Algeranova did not seem at all comfortable, being out of time with the music, which was of uncertain tempo; her stiff arms continually shortened her line. Christiane Hubert danced the Waltz as though it were a bacchanale. The only principal with any sense of style was Eve King, a slightly wan and faded quality gave her an ideal appearance. She also seemed relaxed in her role. The *corps* was excellent and deserved far better of the principals. The whole work was over-lit.

A fine Petrouchka

PETROUCHKA has improved vastly and is now one of the best ballets in the repertoire. The principals have strengthened their interpretations and the *corps* has thoroughly assimilated its style. Peggy Sager as the Ballerina (with points of steel), Vassili Trunoff as the best Moor we have seen, Paul Grinwis coming close to being a great Petrouchka and Paul Hammond as the Charlatan, all gave faultless performances.

GRADUATION BALL, which we last saw as a rather dowdy romp by the National Ballet, has turned into an exhilarating frolic, with scintillating lightness and shades of subtle farce. The *corps de ballet* are all young, vigorous and most presentable. Paul Grinwis as the Head-mistress and John Auld as the creaking General, dominated the work. Pamela Proud, in the Danse Impromptu, Algeranova as the Compére, Vamszer and Celada as the Sylphide and the Scotsman, were all perfectly cast. Sager and Hubert, both so strong and sure in the *fouetté* competition that it rattled off too easily. Vassilkovsky failed to make any impression as the Drummer.

E. C. Mason

The criticism of John Cranko's reproduction of his *Pineapple Poll* for the Borovansky company will appear in the next issue

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This month's full ballet guide

Dance and Dancers

JULY 1954

Is 6d